

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Volume 28 : Number Three : Fall 2007

Aging and Integrity

Integrity and Friendship with God

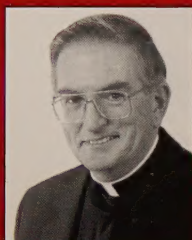
Integrity and the Twelve Step Program

Components of Integrity

Personal Freedom

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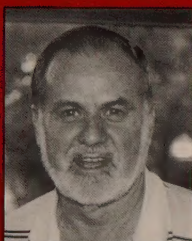
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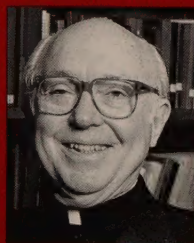
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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Manuscripts are received with the understanding that they have not been previously published and are not currently under consideration elsewhere. Feature articles should be limited to 4,500 words (15 double-spaced pages), with no more than 6 recommended readings; filler items of between 500 and 1,000 words will be considered. All accepted material is subject to editing. When quoting the Bible, the New Revised Version of the Bible is preferred.

Authors are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of proper names in both text and bibliography. Acknowledgments must be given when substantial material is quoted from other publications. Provide author name(s), title of article, title of journal or book, volume number, page(s), month and year, and publisher's permission to use material.

Letters are welcome and will be published as space permits and at the discretion of the editors. Such communications should not exceed 600 words and are subject to editing.

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Editor's Page

INTEGRITY: UNION OF MIND AND HEART

This issue of HUMAN DEVELOPMENT features a number of articles on integrity, both in its psychological and its moral meaning. Because of the influence of Erik H. Erikson integrity is often equated with wisdom. It is clear that we face a crisis of integrity in both the moral and psychological senses. In the United States and elsewhere trust in government and in churches has eroded because of failures in integrity, or what have seemed like failures in integrity, in our leaders. Wisdom seems sorely lacking and integrity seems to be in question in many areas of life.

The week I began writing this piece, the lead article for *The New York Times* "Week in Review" (Sunday, May 13, 2007) noted: "Drug scandals are ravaging cycling and may hold portents for Major League Baseball." People by the millions, the article states, have turned away from following cycling because of charges of doping by leading cyclists, so much so that corporate sponsors are abandoning the sport and many of the most prestigious cycling events have had to be cancelled. Barry Bonds, the great hitter with the San Francisco Giants, is clearly on his way to surpassing the career home run record compiled by Hank Aaron, but every story of his exploits is dogged by persistent accusations that he has used performance-enhancing drugs. Other sports have also faced similar questions about the use of such drugs.

And have you noticed that movies and television repeatedly show corruption where people used to expect integrity, for example, in the police, the armed forces, the government, and the churches? It's as though we expect a lack of integrity. The old joke, "Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they're not out to get you," seems to hit too close to the truth these days with regard to our expectations of integrity: "Just because you're cynical doesn't mean there are persons of integrity." We do face a crisis with regard to integrity. In this issue we hope to address this crisis in a helpful way.

Of course, once people have lost trust in the integrity of those who lead institutions it is very difficult to win them back to trust. Suspicion of anyone in authority in those institutions runs deep after scandal has eroded trust. Moreover, most of us have grown up in an atmosphere that encouraged mistrust. Knowingly or not we are the heirs of Freud and Nietzsche and others who fostered a hermeneutics of suspicion, a tendency to look with jaundiced eye at any claim to purity of motivation or to honesty. And post-modernist thought has only intensified suspicion of any "grand narrative" or pure intention. How do we come to such trust in ourselves as well as in others given all the pressures toward suspicion and cynicism? Let me say a few words to this question in this essay.

Life experience and the reading of the essays in this issue convince me that there are no shortcuts to becoming a person of integrity or wisdom. Nor is the process of becoming such a person without challenges and pitfalls. To grow into integrity one must risk mistakes, sometimes very bad ones because such growth requires the difficult work of developing heart and mind in tandem, a messy process. Moreover, we depend on others in order to negotiate this messy process; no one comes to integrity alone. We are persons only in relationship, and we become persons of integrity only in relationship. Relationships are, as most of us know, messy. It takes time and a lot of give and take, of forgiveness, and of patience to grow into mature and wise friends of others.

The life cycle theory developed by Erikson is one indication of how fraught with difficulties growth into wisdom is. Each of his stages is called a "crisis," a challenging time when development can move forward with relative freedom toward the next stage or be retarded or even stopped. And the more or less successful passage through each stage depends not only on the individual but also on other people and the cul-

ture. And the successful (more or less) negotiation of each stage requires the development of mind and heart in tandem. The kind of development described in the articles by Rhett Diessner, Mary Elizabeth Kenel and myself on spiritual integrity are fraught with similar difficulties and include the difficulty of developing a friendship with the Mystery we call God. In his article in this issue Kevin Krycka shows how the focusing techniques developed by the psychologist Eugene Gendlin require an honest awareness of all the thoughts and feelings that roil us in order to find what our deepest desires are and through this focusing to make some difficult decisions in conflict situations. Other articles in this issue also show how difficult it is to become persons of integrity and show ways to move toward integrity.

One way to develop a unity of mind and heart in the Judeo-Christian tradition is called the discernment of spirits. The word "spirits" can be misleading. In the tradition the word refers to all those movements of mind and heart that make us who we are and move us to action. For such discernment to work, however, mind and heart have to develop together.

The western world (Europe and North America) has not fostered such a unitary development. In a series of talks on the BBC in 1930 and 1932 the late Scottish philosopher John Macmurray argued cogently that westerners, at the time of the breakup of the medieval world, had allowed the mind to develop in freedom, achieving the wonders of modern science, technology and modern historical and literary criticism. He says that the successful conclusion of this process had not been easy, but through trusting our ability to think for ourselves and to tell one another our honest thought westerners had achieved great breakthroughs. But we did not spend corresponding efforts to develop our hearts. As a result, he said, "we are intellectually civilized and emotionally primitive; and we have reached the point at which the development of knowledge threatens to destroy us." The most tragic results of this underdevelopment of the heart showed themselves in the two world wars of the 20th century and the holocaust where the wonders of technology were used to such horrifying effect. The dilemma discerned by Macmurray in 1930 is still with us, I believe.

Macmurray believed that the only way out of our modern dilemma was through the disciplined development of our affective lives to bring them into line with our intellects. But, he said,

We shall have to submit to the discipline of our feelings, not by authority nor by tradition, but by life itself. It will not guarantee us security or pleasure or happiness or comfort; but it will give us what is more worth having, a slow, gradual realization of the goodness of the world and of living in it (*Freedom in the Modern World*).

I believe that the discipline of the discernment of spirits is one way to move in the direction indicated by Macmurray. It can be called a school of mind and heart. We can allow God to bring our minds and hearts more in tune with what God hopes for in our world by engaging in the process of discernment of spirits.

In order to engage in the discernment of spirits we need to pay attention to the whole range of our emotions and thoughts and to let God know about them. As we begin the process, we may be ashamed of some of what we are thinking, feeling and desiring. The only way forward is to acknowledge the reality to ourselves and to God and to another human being who can listen with sympathy and help us to stay honest. For example, the rich man who could not give up his wealth when Jesus told him to sell all and give the proceeds to the poor need not have gone away sad; he could have told Jesus, "I can't do it, will you help me?" or "Can I still hang around with you?" The problem was not that he couldn't do it, but that he was too ashamed to admit his feelings and to ask for help. (See Mark 10:17-22.) If we engage, in a disciplined way, in such honesty with God (and with a trusted confidant) and ask God's help to become more like the human beings God creates us to be, we will gradually grow more attuned in mind and heart with the mind and heart of God; we shall move toward becoming persons of integrity or wisdom. (This is a rather short introduction to the discernment of spirits. One can find a more theoretical development in chapter 9 of my *Spiritual Direction and the Encounter with God* or a more practical one in Appendix B of my *What Do I Want in Prayer?*)

Enjoy the issue.

Bill Barry S.J.

William A. Barry, S.J.
Editor-in-Chief

Integrity: Psychological, Moral and Spiritual

Rhett Diessner



The structure of intrapersonal integrity can well be characterized as a form of “unity-in-diversity” within the human psyche or human soul. To illustrate this notion we will begin with Socrates in Plato’s *The Republic*, Book IV. Socrates explained that the human psyche, or soul, consists of three “parts”: the logical-rational (logiston), the spirited or affective (thymia), and the desiring or willing (epithymia). He argued that when these elements of the soul are in “friendly harmony”—when these three diverse abilities are unified—the soul is temperate and just. Thus we see that the integration of reason, affect, and desire, which are a form of psychological integrity, has a moral outcome. When these three functions are harmoniously united, we create the just soul, the temperate soul. In particular Socrates emphasized that harmony is created in the soul by the mutual and interacting respect of these three capabilities. However, according to Plato, the form of integrity that produces moral outcomes requires that reason be allowed to rule emotion and desire. This is the most harmonious and just form of integrity. Socrates says that when reason rules but also respects the proper roles of emotion and desire, then the person will never commit sacrilege or theft nor treat others treacherously: “neither will he

ever break faith where there have been oaths or agreements." This is a classical definition of integrity.

Immanuel Kant, in his *Critique of Judgement*, also posits three irreducible faculties of the soul: knowledge, feeling and desire. Although Kant's concept of the soul may be different than Socrates' notion of the psyche or soul, and Kant's description of the faculties of knowing, feeling, and desiring may be somewhat incongruent with Socrates' logiston, thymia, and epithymia, nonetheless Kant bases his model on the structural relations of unity-in-diversity. In the last section of the *Critique of Judgement*, "Of the Connexion of the Legislation of Understanding with that of Reason by Means of the Judgement," Kant describes the integration of the three irreducible faculties of the soul, the abilities to know, feel and desire. He implies that the fully functioning human soul, the soul with integrity, has unified the soul's most fundamental capacities.

PSYCHOLOGICAL INTEGRITY: KNOWING, LOVING AND WILLING

In modern psychology, Ernest Hilgard, in "The Trilogy of Mind: Cognition, Affection, and Conation" argues that the trilogy of the mind described by philosophers lives on through psychology's study of cognition (knowing), affect (feeling and emotions) and conation (will or desire). Despite behaviorism's reign throughout much of the 20th century, in which the concepts of cognition and emotion were minimized, and conation (the will) was banished; and despite the current over-emphasis in the discipline of psychology upon "cognition," many psychologists continue to frame the structure of the psyche in terms of these three capacities.

It is the integration of these three capacities that is a sign of the mature and well-developed human: unifying the diverse and irreducible human powers of knowing, emoting and willing is the best description of psychological integrity that I can offer. Perhaps the best known work on integrity in the field of psychology is Carl Rogers' description of being "genuine," or authentic, which are synonyms for integrity. Rogers emphasizes that genuineness is being emotionally congruent with one's behavior—the way a person truly feels on the inside is represented in her behavior on the outside, and vice versa, that is, the behaviors (verbal and motor) that a person performs are congruent with, that is truly represent, the emotions that a person feels. Not as strongly emphasized in Roger's work, but definitely

present, is the integration of knowing and emoting. The genuine person, the person with integrity, has the courage to look inward and examine, to know what her true emotions are. And likewise, the person with integrity then wills her behavior to be congruent with this knowledge of her true feelings.

This, however, leaves open the question of whether it shows integrity to hurt others if your true feeling toward them is hatred. Although Rogers' approach does run the danger of value relativism, one can also see that hatred is incongruent with Rogers' dictum of unconditional positive regard. Additionally, from my perspective and that of most spiritual traditions, hatred is morally condemned. Nonetheless, the expression of an honest hatred does show a form of integrity that deceitful or hypocritical harboring of hatred does not. When a person harbors feelings and purposefully miscommunicates them, Rogers refers to this as a form of "incongruence" (non-genuineness) that shows "falseness or deceit" (p. 341 in *On Becoming a Person*). Although I abhor hatred, I recognize the integrity of people who are up-front with their desire to hurt, and morally admire them over those who give lip-service to love, but express their hatred hypocritically through deceitful means. As for the person who is genuine about his hatred, "We say of such a person that we know 'exactly where he stands'" (*ibid.*, p. 283). From a Rogerian viewpoint, one could frame this as recognizing that a person could have integrity (be genuine and congruent), but lack in positive unconditional regard for all persons.

Let us take an example. Although we seldom want to call love simply an emotion, love can be framed as the mother of all emotions: sadness is loss of the love object; anger is a response to unjust threat to the love object; fear is anticipated loss of the love object; happiness is reunion with, or anticipated union with, the love object; disgust is recognition of contamination of the love object, etc. Psychological integrity involves knowing what we love. First we have to look inward and examine ourselves to see what we truly love. Do we love comfort? Do we love material objects? Do we love ourselves? Do we love the members of our inner circle? Do we love our enemies? Do we love all humanity? Do we love God?

Second, we need to know about the objects of our love. How deeply can we understand the members of our inner circle? How deeply can we know God? How deeply can we know our pleasures or our bodies? Love

motivates us to will ourselves to ever deeper knowledge of the objects of our love. The greater our knowledge, the deeper our capacity to love. And “will” is omnipresent: whenever and whatever we *choose* to know is preceded by an act of will, and whenever and whomever and whatever we *choose* to love is preceded by an act of will. That which we love, we will to know ever better, and that which we choose to know, we learn to love more effectively.

This psychological integrity—the unifying of our capabilities of loving, knowing and willing—appears “naturally” in the human being; it seems inherent in our design. Any clinician will recognize, however, that human psychological disorders involve ‘disordering’ of the integration of loving and willing and knowing. (See psychiatrist H. B. Danesh, *The Psychology of Spirituality*, for further explanation of the integration of knowing, willing and loving, and for clinical descriptions of disorders of knowledge, love and will.) For instance, if we over-emphasize the ability to know, at the expense of not integrating the ability to love with our knowledge, we become empty shells that place the law above the spirit. If we over-emphasize the ability to love, without integrating the moderating influence of knowledge, then we run the risk of passionate foolishness, or trying to love others, but doing it stupidly and ineffectively. If we do not integrate the power of the will with our abilities to love and to know, then we become stagnated and atrophied due to inaction and a lack of service to others. If we over-emphasize the power of the will, by minimizing the integration of love, we become tyrants. This recognition of the possible breakdown in, and disordering of, psychological integrity, leads us from describing integrity to prescribing integrity—from psychology to ethics.

MORAL AND SPIRITUAL INTEGRITY

So far we have described a framework of understanding psychological integrity, but have not addressed moral integrity. Moral integrity is the type of integrity most often meant in everyday speech. The phrase, a woman or man of integrity, leaps to mind. In the English language this phrase evokes for us thoughts of a person who is honest, who is trustworthy, and who honors his or her promises, agreements, oaths, contracts, and covenants: a person true to her word. Persons of integrity integrate what they say with what they do. In particular we consider a person of moral integrity to be a person who has congruence

Spiritual integrity, which unites knowing God, loving God, and willing God’s will, causes us to become a “whole” human being.

between what he says he will do and what he actually does. Moral integrity is the opposite of hypocrisy.

Psychological integrity is necessary, but insufficient, for moral integrity. Psychological integrity requires the unification of knowing, loving, and willing; moral integrity involves the unification of knowing the good, loving the good, and willing the good. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá (son of Bahá’u’lláh, and head of the Bahá’í Faith, 1892-1921) was asked about persons with this kind of moral integrity, who showed kindness to all creatures, cared for the poor, and worked toward universal peace, but believed neither in God nor in divine scripture. He explained that “such actions” “are praiseworthy and approved, and are the glory of humanity. But these actions alone are not sufficient; they are [like] a body of the greatest loveliness, but without spirit” (*Some Answered Questions*, p. 300). ‘Abdu’l-Bahá goes on to say that it is through the integration of knowing God, loving God, and a good-will that a human action becomes perfected and complete. Moral integrity, without knowing and loving God, is worthy of praise; but spiritual integrity, which unites knowing God, loving God, and willing God’s will, causes us to become a “whole” human being and to reflect more perfectly the image of God that is the structure of our soul.

Of course, believing in God is an act of faith, and those that do not believe in God will take exception to the claim that knowing and loving God is necessary in order to become a whole human being. Believers and unbelievers alike may well agree that knowing, loving and willing the good is a description of moral integrity; however, non-believers will find the concept of spiritual integrity somewhat meaningless in framing the wholeness of human being.

Reason: What, then, do you want to know?
 Augustine: The very things for which I have prayed.
 Reason: Summarize them concisely.
 Augustine: I want to know God and the soul.
 Reason: Nothing else?
 Augustine: Nothing else at all (St Augustine, *Soliloquia*).

Spiritual integrity relates to the purpose of this magazine, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, as found in the words of executive editor, Linda D. Amadeo, in her last sentence of "Invitation to Authors," "human beings can become what we are created to be: persons being made whole in the image and likeness of God."

My own summary of the scriptures of the Jewish, Christian, Muslim and Bahá'í faiths, in the context of individual integrity, recognizes that God has made a covenant with us: if we strive to know God and the good, and to love God and the good, and to will God's will, and to integrate these three human powers in our minds, hearts and behavior, then we will become whole in the image and likeness of God.

Veiled in My immemorial being and in the ancient eternity of My essence, I knew My love for thee: therefore I created thee, have engraved on thee Mine image and revealed to thee My beauty (Bahá'u'lláh, *Hidden Words*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1963, p. 4).

SYSTEMIC INTEGRITY

Both individuals and institutions may be ascribed integrity. So far we have only addressed individual integrity, but the integrity of institutions and systems is relevant to human development as well. In the Socratic sense, institutions (such as a city) mirror the conditions of the individuals that comprise them. For a city to be ruled by justice, the individual souls that comprise the city must also be intrapersonally just. Thus we can speak of a city as having integrity, although that sounds a bit odd to our ears. But other institutions, especially businesses and religious denominations can have more or less integrity. XYZ Corporation has integrity; we can do business with them without our conscience suffering. This Church has integrity. When we refer to a church or a business as having integrity, we mean that it is not corrupt, it is not contaminated, it is pure. In terms of our leitmotif of *unity-in-diversity*, an institution with integrity is one that has united diverse peo-

ples and diverse concepts and diverse rules/principles; and there is no dis-unifying dissent within the institution (disagreement among members, in the sense of a clash of differing opinions is not dis-unifying dissent, as long as the members follow the consultative path, do not *insist* on their own viewpoints, and bow humbly to majority decisions). And, as the individual, the institution that has integrity is known for actualizing its ideals. That is, the institution as a whole serves the goals that it preaches. It consistently does what its spokespersons say it will do.

Integrity is as much a process as it is an end-state, and thus, like individuals, institutions have relatively more or less integrity. Just as we idiomatically say "no one is perfect," and all of us are sinners to some degree, so it is with institutions. No institution, or institutional structures, created by humans will have perfect integrity. And there will always be a dialectical (bi-directional) relationship between the degree of moral integrity of the individuals and the degree of moral integrity of the institution—the individuals and the institution will influence each others' development of integrity, for better or worse.

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND INTEGRITY

The current Positive Psychology movement in the field of psychology emphasizes three pillars: subjective well-being or happiness, individual traits or character strengths, and positive institutions. Although little attention has been paid to studying positive institutions in the recently emerging positive psychology literature, the movement assumes that individuals' character strengths influence the integrity of institutions to which they belong, and the level of the integrity of institutions influences the development of individual's character strengths, including intrapersonal integrity.

The Positive Psychology movement has produced a handbook of classification of character strengths and virtues, which the authors, Chris Peterson and Martin Seligman, refer to as a "manual of the sanities" to contrast it with DSM-IV, the manual that psychologists and psychiatrists use to classify mental disorders. They have identified six major virtues (knowledge/wisdom, courage, justice, humanity/love, temperance, transcendence), which they describe as cross-cultural, emphasized in Eastern and Western philosophies and highlighted in the world's religions; within these six virtues they have identified three to five "character strengths" that represent a particular virtue.

They consider the virtue of Courage to be the mother of integrity, and its principal components are authenticity and honesty. Positive psychologists Kennon Sheldon, Lucy Davidson, and Elizabeth Powell define integrity as capturing “a character trait in which people are true to themselves, accurately representing—privately and publicly—their internal states, intentions, and commitments. Such persons accept and take responsibility for their feelings and behaviors, owning them, as it were, and reaping substantial benefits by so doing” (pp. 249-250). They go on to specific behavioral criteria for integrity: a) a behavior pattern congruent with espoused values, b) willing to publicly justify moral convictions, even in the face of opposition, and c) caring for others, especially those in need. Sheldon *et al.* note that honesty connotes “factual truthfulness and interpersonal sincerity;” authenticity concerns “emotional genuineness” and “psychological depth;” and that “integrity refers to moral probity and self-unity” (p. 250).

A major tenet of positive psychology is that the virtue-derived character strengths lead to happiness, or what is typically called *subjective well-being* in the research literature. In reviewing the correlates of integrity found in empirical studies Sheldon *et al.* found that measures of integrity predict greater life satisfaction, higher empathy, self-actualization, positive mood states, openness to experience, better interpersonal relationships, and the trait of conscientiousness. Although one hopes we are motivated to greater levels of integrity and authenticity for altruistic purposes, there are clearly strong psychological rewards for developing and maintaining one’s integrity. In terms of institutional integrity, Sheldon *et al.* refer to studies that show positive correlations between educational administrators’ levels of integrity and teachers’ trust in the educational institution. Likewise, in the business world, the more authentic workers perceive their managers to be, the more effective are the workplace relationships between managers and workers. Chris Peterson, in his *A Primer in Positive Psychology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) summarizes integrity in institutions, without specifically mentioning the word integrity, thus:

Besides being culturally congruent with their workers, good workplaces are characterized by certain institution-level virtues. Excellent work organizations have an articulated moral goal or vision that can be embraced by workers and customers alike. This vision must guide the

actual conduct within the organization. Slogans and logos provide clues about the vision of a work organization, but it is our observation of day-to-day practices that provides the real proof of their existence...excellent work organizations follow through on commitments—to workers and to customers. Promises and contracts, even implied ones, are honored. Said another way, in a good workplace, the spirit of the law trumps the letter of the law (p. 289).

In summary, the Positive Psychology movement shows empirical evidence that institutions with integrity correlate with individuals of integrity; and intrapersonal integrity, as a character strength, correlates with subjective well being.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

“O LORD of hosts, happy are those who trust in you!” (Psalm 84:13).

“Put your whole trust and confidence in God, Who hath created you, and seek ye His help in all your affairs” (Bahá’u’lláh. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, Wilmette, IL: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 1983, p. 251).

We are created in the image of God, and integrity is a spiritual virtue; therefore surely God is a Being of integrity as well. God may be viewed as unifying all the diverse divine virtues in a perfect integration. Integrations are dynamic and hierarchical. We know that when Jesus was asked about the greatest commandment, he referred to the virtue of agapic love, and he put love ‘objects’ in hierarchical order: first love God; second, love your fellow humans. Paul also set up a hierarchy in his famous statement: “So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13). Therefore it seems reasonable to assume love is a foundation for integrity. Love becomes the spiritual motivation to strive to become a being of greater and greater integrity; and integrity becomes a mode of existence that is a medium for effective expression of our love to others.

The most salient manner in which integrity expresses our love for others is through trustworthiness. As mentioned above, when we imagine a person or institution with integrity, one of the first concrete examples that comes to mind is that of keeping promises, of maintaining our covenants, and of nobly and honorably

caring for any trust we are responsible to safeguard.

"The person who is trustworthy in very small matters is also trustworthy in great ones; and the person who is dishonest in very small matters is also dishonest in great ones" (Luke 16:10).

"O people! The goodliest vesture in the sight of God in this day is trustworthiness. All bounty and honour shall be the portion of the soul that arrayeth itself with this greatest of adornments" (Bahá'u'lláh. *Trustworthiness. A Compilation of Extracts from the Bahá'í Writings*. London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, p.1, 1987).

As God has perfect integrity, God is completely trustworthy. God, who cares, is the Maker of Covenants with all humankind. We cannot err in putting our whole trust and confidence in our Creator. Trusting has important implications for a mood disorder that disrupts intrapersonal human development across our world: anxiety. In terms of cognitive and emotional development, thoughts and feelings of trust cannot co-exist at the same time in our heart and mind with thoughts and feelings of anxiety. In our prayers and meditations, as we focus on God's trustworthiness, and our trust in the Belovéd, anxiety disappears. Likewise with our acts of service: when we serve others out of agapic love (selfless love, *caritas*), and with trust that God will guide our path, anxiety is minimized.

Among the greatest of trusts that God has given us humans is the safeguarding and development of our souls. We believe that our soul is created in the image of God, and thus all the divine attributes, such as love, trustworthiness, mercy, forgiveness, beauty, perfection, justice, etc., lie within our soul as potentialities awaiting their development, expression and integration. "O friends! Be not careless of the virtues with which ye have been endowed, neither be neglectful of your high destiny" (Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, 1983, p. 196).

Therefore, the person of spiritual integrity knows God by gaining intimate knowledge of the attributes of God that are the reality of the human soul. "[I]n thine inward being thou revealest the hidden mysteries which are the divine trust deposited within thee" (Bahá'u'lláh, *The Seven Valleys*, Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991, p. 27). The person of integrity loves the beauty of the divine attributes deposited in the soul (viz. Diessner, *Psyche and Eros*, ch. 8). The person of integrity wills the development of the divine attributes

which are the image of God in the soul. And, finally, the person of spiritual integrity integrates knowledge, love and will in service to God and service to all humanity.

"Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression. *Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts. Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive*" (*Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, 1983, p. 285; italics added).

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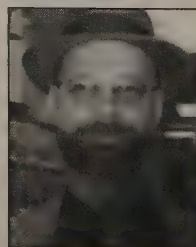
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Integrity and Friendship with God

William A. Barry, S.J.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. (Psalm 111:10)

In any psychological discussion of integrity Erik H. Erikson, the renowned psychoanalyst, is a prominent figure. He presented a psychosocial theory of personality development that has proved useful in many disciplines. In *Childhood and Society* he devotes one chapter to his theory and entitles it the "Eight Ages of Man." Each of the ages, he postulates, begins with a crisis that needs to be resolved, and the crisis in each age has to do with negotiating a new developmental hurdle placed before a person by internal growth, by others and by one's culture. Depending on how well one negotiates each hurdle an individual is more or less well equipped for the next one. For example, the first crisis for babies, he postulates, is whether they will learn basic trust or mistrust in themselves, their caretakers and the world in general. If the child becomes more trustful than mistrustful at this stage, he or she is better equipped to handle the next crisis which involves developing a sense of autonomy about oneself regarding the social skills of bowel and bladder control and semi-independence from one's parents. Failure to establish such a sense of autonomy leads to a pervasive sense of shame or doubt.



We know, from faith and experience, that we are deeply loved children of God created for friendship with God and with all God's other children.

The other stages have a similar dynamic. He calls his eighth, or final, stage the crisis between ego integrity and despair and equates ego integrity with wisdom. In attempting to describe what he means by ego integrity he gives one descriptor that I have always found compelling: "It is the acceptance of one's one and only life cycle as something that had to be and that, by necessity, permitted of no substitutions: it thus means a new, a different love of one's parents" (p. 268). In this article I hope to help the reader to make sense of this sentence. I want to show how a developing friendship with God leads to integrity in both the psychological and the moral senses. I also hope that you will see why I used the citation from Psalm 111 at the beginning.

A SPIRITUAL IDENTITY

I will refer to the Eriksonian stages pertaining to adulthood but presume that people will also be developing through their human relationships. I want to focus on how a personal relationship with God helps us to grow into human maturity, that is, into the image and likeness of God that we are created to be.

Erikson describes the crisis of adolescence as one of developing a stable personal identity. The relatively successful accomplishment of this stage leads a young man or woman into the world of adulthood where the resolution of the crisis of intimacy leads to the crisis of generativity whose successful resolution leads to the crisis of integrity. There is an equivalent crisis of spiritual identity that could be equated with Erikson's adolescent crisis. And like the psychological crisis of adolescence this spiritual identity crisis may be, and often is, delayed so that many who are adult in years still suffer from a sort of spiritual identity diffusion; they do not know from experience and faith that they are beloved children of God. As a result they cannot enter the stage

of intimacy with God, that is, engage God in a personal relationship. Their religious lives can be described as dutiful and even pious, but they do not exude a lively sense of the abiding presence of God who calls them to adult freedom in the world and in the church.

Pastoral care that opens those who have the capacity and the desire for a more engaging and mature relationship with God is a great need in the church, not just for the sake of the church, but also for the sake of the world.

What might such pastoral care try to do with those who exhibit adult maturity in their lives, but who seem to lack a vibrant religious maturity? First, it would aim to elicit the desire for something more in the way of a relationship with God. Many adults have such desires but may not be able to articulate these desires for what they are, that is, as desires for a closer relationship with God. In our churches we need to speak more often of the reality of God's desire for such a personal relationship and of the signs of a reciprocal desire for such a relationship in us human beings. I have used vignettes from literature and from experience to indicate how people are suddenly flooded with a desire "for they know not what" and, at the same time, with a great sense of well-being. These experiences, I believe, reflect the creative desire of God who continually creates us and tries to draw us into a personal relationship that can be described as something like a friendship. (For example, see *God and You: Prayer as a Personal Relationship* or the soon to be published *God Wants Your Friendship*.) These experiences, savored and reflected on, can form the basis of our spiritual identity. We know, from faith and experience, that we are deeply loved children of God created for friendship with God and with all God's other children.

INTIMACY WITH GOD

When we savor and reflect on this foundational experience of God, we find ourselves attracted to prayer, to taking time to be with God. We enter something like a "honeymoon" with God. But soon enough we find ourselves wondering about this closeness, wondering whether it is real, whether we are kidding ourselves to think that God delights in us. "How can God want friendship with the likes of me?" We may become afraid of what God will demand of us; more often, we become aware of how far we have fallen short of being the kind of people God wants us to be. In the presence of God all of us feel unholy and unworthy, and we begin to

withdraw from closeness with God, presuming and, perhaps, feeling that God is angry at our past sins and could not want friendship with us. There is some truth to this experience. We have sinned and fallen short of God's ideals for us. The untruth or delusion in the experience is to believe that God no longer loves us or wants our friendship. We have entered one of the crises that can bedevil any relationship, but which is especially strong in our relationship with the all-holy One.

If we have nurtured the foundational relationship, however, we can withstand the onslaught of the realization of how sinful we have been and are, and we can ask God to reveal to us how God sees us. As we allow God's view of us and our world into our hearts and minds, we become aware of how deeply sinful and flawed our world and we have become through our own fault. Remorse and sorrow fill our hearts. It is not unknown for people to sob with sorrow, not only for how they have failed to live up to God's dreams, but also for how far our human world falls short of that dream. But, at the same time, we feel a great sense of relief, as though a great burden has been lifted from our shoulders. As we become aware of our sins and the sinful condition of our world, we also become aware of the depth of God's love for us sinners.

Moreover, for those who are Christian, this relief and even joy come from the realization that God took on our flesh in Jesus of Nazareth, lived in this sinful world and suffered the consequences of living as the kind of human being God wants all of us to be. Even the heinous crime of his crucifixion did not deflect God's love and desire for our friendship. God still loves us and wants our friendship even though we have and will fall short of God's dream for us. With this lived experience of Jesus' death and of his words of forgiveness spoken from the cross we can enter into a level of intimacy in which we too want to care for God.

In his *Spiritual Exercises* Ignatius suggests that people who are able to look on Jesus dying on the cross ask themselves: "What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I to do for Christ?" (*Sp. Ex.*, n. 53). By posing these questions Ignatius seems to presuppose that those who have come this far in their relationship with Jesus are now able to love him for his own sake. One measure of maturity is the ability to love another for the other's sake, and not merely for one's own purposes. It is, to my mind, one necessary stage on the road to integrity, in both the psychological and the moral senses. At the end of the

One measure of maturity is the ability to love another for the other's sake, and not merely for one's own purposes.

Spiritual Exercises, in the "Contemplation to Attain Love," Ignatius writes that "love ought to manifest itself more by deeds than by words;" indeed love "consists in a mutual communication between persons" such that both want to give what they have to the other (*Sp. Ex.*, nn. 230-231). Those who have come this far have entered into spiritual intimacy with God and have taken a big step toward integrity and wisdom.

SPIRITUAL GENERATIVITY

The spiritual intimacy just noted can, and often does, lead naturally into what might be called spiritual generativity. Because of my love for God I want to know God better in order to love God more and to engage cooperatively in God's project or family business, which is the world. In terms of the *Spiritual Exercises* we are here talking of the desire of the "Second Week" which is to know Jesus more intimately in order to love him more and to follow him more closely. At this stage the focus of friendship with God shifts from what one might call a loving gaze at one another to a common gaze at the needs of the world around us. Just as a couple who marry will begin to shift their focus from the dyad to the developing family they are building together or two friends may begin to work together on a common project, so too those who move into this new phase of friendship with God find their focus shifting to God's project or dream for the world and their place in that unfolding dream.

As I get to know God, or, in the Christian's case, Jesus, I begin to see how God does not want sacrifice but a changed heart that will engage cooperatively with God in the shaping of a human world more in keeping with God's dream. Moreover, I begin to see that siding with God and with Jesus is costly and may well lead to the same kind of suffering, loss of friends and enmity Jesus and all the prophets and friends of God have suf-

ferred throughout history. I have a choice to make. Do I want to throw my lot in with God and with Jesus?

The story of the rich man in Mark 10:17-22 illustrates this choice rather starkly. He wants to do more for God, but when Jesus tells him to sell all his possessions and give the proceeds to the poor, he goes away "grieving." The cost is too great. All of us who ask to know Jesus more intimately will run up against the cost of this friendship and will be tempted to move away from this generative aspect of the friendship. The problem with the rich man is not that he feels the bite of the demands of this new closeness to Jesus but that he leaves the relationship. He could have continued the growing friendship by just telling Jesus how difficult it would be to give up his wealth and asking for help or even asking if he can still be his friend if he cannot, at least now, give up his wealth.

The point I want to make in this article about integrity is that someone who grows into this generative stage of friendship with God is moving into difficult territory because even though we are created for friendship with God and with one another, we are all bedeviled by fears of what such friendship will entail. We see the kind of integrity Jesus displayed in trusting in his vision of God and of what it means to be a human being in the face of both civil and religious condemnation. Moreover he invited his followers to live the same way. God is not comforting in such circumstances, at least not in the ordinary sense of comforting. Anyone who knows any history knows that those who tell the truth in God's name run into opposition, even persecution. But those who stay the course with God find themselves becoming freer of fear and thus more able to be honest with themselves and with others. They can speak the truth in love and let the chips fall where they may. From what I have observed, they also exude a kind of joy and enthusiasm for God's project that can be infectious, as was Jesus' joy and enthusiasm. They have become people of moral and religious integrity.

SPIRITUAL WISDOM

People who engage in this kind of generative friendship with God come face-to-face with God's ongoing suffering that the world is not the way God wants it to be. They also realize that the way God is often depicted by religious writing and preaching, for instance, as jealous, vindictive, voracious for sacrifice,

continually on the lookout for sinners to condemn, pains God and does God a terrible disservice. God does not want people to kill themselves and others in order to bring about a better world. Yet some religious leaders preach such horrors about God. God creates and sustains a world where horrors are perpetrated every day, and some of them in God's name. God did not want Jesus to be crucified, for example, but at least some of those who did this deed thought that they were acting in God's name. How does God do it? How immense must God's compassion be that God continually keeps this world in existence! In a sense, how vulnerable God becomes by creating our world and us human beings and needing us to cooperate in God's project for it to succeed! Those who engage in this kind of generative friendship with God grow in compassion for God. It seems almost blasphemous, but I have come to believe that this is true. For Christians the entrée to such compassion for God is the contemplation of the suffering and death of Jesus after one has grown to love him as a friend. We ask to be with him, to bear his suffering with him. This is at least as difficult as it is for any one of us to ask to share the final suffering of our closest friend. "What was it like for you to go to your death trusting that this way, the way of the 'Suffering Servant' of the prophet Isaiah, was your vocation, the way to be the Messiah of God? What was it like to experience the betrayal of your friend Judas, the denial of Peter, the abandonment of all your closest friends? What was it like for you to feel abandoned by your Father?" These are the kinds of questions we ask Jesus if we want to share his final days with him. What an act of trust in God and in his own discernment of his vocation as he became the willing victim, the scapegoat, the sacrificial lamb, trusting that God would be on his side when everything in his culture and his religion said just the opposite! Those who follow this road with him find it very difficult and, at the same time, what they want to do, with God's help, because they love Jesus. As they stay with him, they grow in compassion and love for him, and in compassion and love for God the Father who suffers with him. They understand in a new and profound way the words of John's gospel: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life" (John 3:16). Here on Golgotha we find God is bottomless compassion for us sinners, and we grow in compassion for God who has to sustain a world where such horrors happen—to God as well as others.

St. Teresa of Avila, the 16th century Spanish Carmelite reformer and mystic, seems to have come to this depth of compassion for God. She described God as an immense and beautiful palace in which everything that exists dwells and then went on to write: "It is the most dreadful thing in the world that God our Creator should suffer so many misdeeds to be committed by His creatures within Himself..." (*Interior Castle*, tr. and ed. E. Allison Peers. Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1961, 194). Perhaps, if we reflect on God's sustaining presence to all the horrors of our world, we will be sympathetic and thus be more of an adult friend of God in the process.

What has this kind of compassion to do with our theme of integrity? Can you imagine a person who could have that much compassion for God acting without moral integrity? Acting malevolently toward others? Betraying trust? Lying to protect her own or even her community's reputation? I would say that people who have come this far in their friendship with God have come far toward a kind of integrity that has compassion for everyone and everything, something akin to the compassion of God.

For Christians, of course, Golgotha is not the end of the story. We believe that God raised Jesus bodily from the dead and that Jesus lives now in some mysterious but bodily real way within the very life of God. The resurrection is God's vindication of Jesus' trust that the way of the "Suffering Servant" was the way to God's victory in this world. N. T. Wright, in his massive and solidly scholarly *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, comes to the conclusion that the only way to make historical sense of the rise of Christianity is to believe that Jesus did rise from the dead. The close disciples of Jesus did not show themselves as heroes when Jesus was murdered; only his women friends seem to have been brave enough to stay with Jesus to the end. Yet these cowardly friends were transformed by the totally unexpected event of the resurrection and by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that followed it. They preached with boldness, suffered persecution with joy, shared their goods with one another, and even welcomed gentiles into their midst without first making them follow all the prescriptions of the Jewish law. One example from many will suffice. In the Acts of the Apostles, Peter and John are released from detention, having been forbidden to speak of the "Name." The assembly prays to God: "And now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with boldness..." "When they had

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I am the product of all that has happened to me
and that I have done in my life, good and bad.
And I am a friend of God as I am.

prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:23-31). Something happens with the gift of the resurrection that leads to lack of fear, from which flows integrity, the ability to tell the truth without fear of consequences even when the consequences are persecution and death.

CHRISTIAN INTEGRITY

Here is where we come to a Christian understanding of Erikson's description of ego integrity or wisdom cited at the beginning of this article. To the degree that people have come to this depth of friendship with God, they are freed of fear of their past sins and mistakes and of a sense that the world is doomed. No matter what has happened or will happen in this world, God will not abandon it or them. Moreover, God has forgiven them their own past sins. They now know that they are loved as they are, forgiven, healed, and made more whole than they had ever dreamed was possible. Hence, they can accept that the one life that they have is the only one that could have been, in this sense. My past cannot be undone; I am the product of all that has happened to me and that I have done in my life, good and bad. And I am a friend of God as I am. "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he loved us first" (1 John 4:18-19). You can imagine Peter's joy when he realized that Jesus still loved him and wanted him to "feed my lambs" even though he had three times denied knowing Jesus just a few days earlier (cf. John 21:15-19). No wonder he seems to have had no fear after Pentecost.

In addition, people who have come to some level of

such friendship with God look on others with the same compassion that they look at themselves. They seem more able to practice the hard work of forgiveness that is so necessary for the health of our world. Desmond Tutu, the Anglican Archbishop of South Africa, was able to move his whole nation toward forgiveness through the "Truth and Reconciliation" work he fostered. Pope John Paul II went to the Roman prison and spoke a word of forgiveness to the man who had tried to kill him. In the Spring 2006 issue ("What is the Real World?") I referred to a firefighter whose son was killed while a passenger in a car driven by a drunken friend. At the trial Mr. Malone asked the judge to give the driver the minimum sentence possible. Mr. Malone's other son, Matt, a Jesuit scholastic, believes that his father forgave the driver because he was able, like Jesus, to see the human being in front of him. God's grace turned his heart to thoughts of forgiveness.

Finally people who have come to this depth of wisdom realize that God will never abandon the world in spite of all the folly and horror we human beings have perpetrated in it, folly and horror which will, until the end of time, remain part of the history of the world and, therefore, part of what the world will always be. This spiritual wisdom adds a new dimension to Erikson's description of wisdom. The one historical life that is the world is and will be the one and only one that could have been for the world to be what it has become. The final consummation of the world, which we pray for when we say, with the last words of the Bible, "Come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20), will somehow subsume all that has made this world the action of God, all its

beauty and horror, all its human goodness and sin.

There is a wisdom that comes from a sustained friendship with God, a wisdom that leads not only to inner peace and joy but also to the kinds of moral stances that move our world toward the dream of God announced by the prophet Isaiah, "They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (11:9). Thus, the fear of the Lord that is the beginning of wisdom does not mean a servile, cowering kind of fear, but a healthy sense of awe and wonder before the Holy One, a sense that does not preclude accepting God's offer of friendship.

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Integrity and the Aging Process

Mary Elizabeth Kenel, Ph.D.



The Lord never fails to bless those who walk with integrity. (Psalm 84:11)

As we embark on our later years and strive to become wise persons, integrity assumes increasing importance in our self-assessment. To be deemed a person of integrity is no small praise, especially in a culture that tends to glorify the showy and the slick. Psychologist Erik H. Erikson named the last of the life stages *Integrity vs. Despair*, because our task is one of integration, of making sense of our life as we approach life's end. But the development of integrity, like the search for wisdom, is a task that must be addressed throughout our entire life. As the Psalmist noted, we must *walk with integrity* all our days.

INTEGRITY AS INNER PSYCHOLOGICAL HARMONY OR WHOLENESS

Living in a state of psychological harmony or wholeness depends on our willingness to deepen our self-knowledge and to act from our personal center. Developing this sort of integrity requires that we recognize the contraries within our makeup and grapple with the conflicts that arise from them. Living with integrity asks that we make an effort to balance the complex tension created by the warring parts or opposites that make up our personalities: the masculine and feminine, the healthy and sick, generosity and selfishness, courage and cowardice, all our high spiritual aims and unruly physical impulses.

The tension demanded by such wholeness is not a matter of

either/or in which the two factors are ultimately contradictory and incapable of reconciliation. Opposites such as right/wrong or true/false cannot be integrated, as one must exclude the other. Instead, we are engaged in a both/and situation in which one side does not cancel out the other. Tension is resolved through a balancing of each quality or aspect of ourselves that offers us the opportunity for a full range of responses to life's complexities and the achievement of higher levels of integration.

Striving to bring integrity, psychological harmony or wholeness into our lives is a costly process. It requires us to examine and come to accept our shadow side as well as the lighter and brighter aspects of our self. Sometimes this shadow is referred to as a basic defect that is inextricably woven within our basic strength. Recognition of this sort of wholeness that comprises both light and dark elements was expressed in the work of the ancient Middle Eastern rug weavers. The tradition of these artisans required that each rug contain a slight flaw in the design. It might be a thread of a different color or a shape just slightly asymmetrical. Whatever form the flaw took, it was nonetheless an integral part of the whole and served as a reminder that perfection is found only in God. In her poem *Integrity*, Adrienne Rich offers us a glimpse of this aspect of wholeness:

Anger and tenderness, the spider's genius to spin
And weave in the same action from her own body,
Anywhere, even from a broken web.
("Integrity" in *Planetarium: A Retrospective 1950-1980*, Watershed Tapes Signature Series #C201.)

The story of Job reminds us that growth in integrity occurs only if we lose our pride in our goodness and recognize the darkness that has always been there. Within the humility such recognition entails, we may find new strength to accept suffering as a source of meaning and a door to further maturation. Moving through such negative feelings as shame and self-loathing to repentance and finally to awe at the complex mystery of our selves opens up our vision to the immensity of God who contains all possibilities and resolves all contradictions.

When confronting our flaws, then, we need not do violence to ourselves in an effort to root out evil. We need only direct our efforts toward the creation of harmony and wholeness and strive not to permit our basic defect to dominate our decisions. In another section of

her poem, *Integrity*, Adrienne Rich writes:

Anger and tenderness, my selves,
And now I can believe they breathe in me
As angels—not polarities.

Discovery of the dark side of our natures can lead to a sense of wholeness, an acceptance of who I truly am that is free from grandiosity. It can stimulate a new reverence for our selves as flawed creatures but loved by God and by others. As Paul Tillich phrased it, "the courage to be is the courage to accept oneself as accepted, in spite of unacceptability." (Tillich, P. "You Are Accepted" in *The Shaking of the Foundations*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948).

When life's circumstances oblige us to acknowledge our shadow and the betrayals of self and others that spring from our basic defect, how might we strive for the inner harmony and wholeness that constitutes integrity?

One way we might nurture wholeness is through counseling aimed at helping us resolve the sense of interior division and lack of cohesion expressed in our feelings of regret, guilt, and shame. Searching for the roots of disturbing memories and learning to forgive our past mistakes fosters consolidation and integration of the self. Counseling may help reduce the power of negative memories that threatens to overwhelm us, while bolstering the strength of positive elements in our personality. It also might assist us in coming to a deeper level of self-awareness and self-acceptance. Progress cannot be made in any area unless we first acknowledge and take responsibility for the difficulties that exist. Denial of weakness is the real enemy of genuine growth.

Living in a faith community also offers us opportunities to reconcile the contraries that exist within us as we seek to become persons of integrity. Although we are forced to acknowledge our basic flaws and the sin that arises from them, our membership in a faith-centered community offers us a sense of solidarity with our sisters and brothers. We may find comfort in the healing images Scripture offers us of Christ the Shepherd, who meets with compassion all the hungry, the sick, the possessed, and the dispossessed. St. John's first epistle (1 John 3:18-20) offers a message of hope and comfort in this regard, reminding us that by the practice of a real and active love we may be *certain* that we are children of the truth, i.e., persons of integrity. John adds that, as children of the truth we may quiet our hearts (consciences) in God's presence, whatever accusations they might make against us, *because God is*

greater than our hearts and knows everything.

PERSONAL EXPRESSION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL REALITY

A second aspect of integrity challenges us to live in such a way that our inner and outer selves are in accord with each other: our actions accurately reflecting our desires and our words truly reflecting our thoughts. We are challenged to deal honestly with others as well as ourselves. This aspect of integrity is closely related to such concepts as congruence, authenticity, being true to our selves as well as being truly our selves. Shakespeare's injunction, "to thine own self be true," points to the importance of this aspect of integrity while St. Paul's rueful remarks (Romans 7:15), "I cannot understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate," attest to the difficulty we all experience when striving for integrity at this level.

Perhaps this form of integrity is best demonstrated during early childhood, before we have learned to adapt or adjust ourselves to the demands of others, demands that often involve a distortion of our being. All too quickly, we learn to separate our acts from our deepest desires, becoming what others wish us to be rather than seeking to be our truest selves. We come to use words that hide, rather than reveal, our thoughts, fearing, perhaps, that the price of speaking our mind is the loss of the love or approval of someone we admire. We learn to guard our faces, no longer allowing them to register the full play of feeling, shuttering our eyes, those windows of the soul that would speak an inconvenient truth. We may be troubled when we sense that our self-concepts have become structured in ways that are at odds with our total experience of ourselves and demand that we disregard our own self-knowledge whenever it conflicts with who we feel we ought to be. At times, a feeling that we no longer know what is true for us or where our integrity truly resides may trouble us.

As we enter our elder years, however, we are offered an opportunity to recover some of the integrity we appeared to lose in making an effort to adapt to the demands of the world. Faced with the knowledge that our time is limited, one of the main objectives of elder therapy is to provide an opportunity for achieving a greater level of self-awareness. Challenging our passive acceptance of societal values, many of which have extinguished our ability to live with congruence, we are encouraged to act with creativity and integrity. Not all of society's values are bad or to be ignored indiscrimi-

We are challenged to deal honestly with others as well as ourselves.

nately; what is crucial to our integrity is the awareness or mindfulness with which we participate in the life of our society. Integrity understood as authenticity calls us to act with awareness, to make choices, and to accept responsibility for those choices. Authentic living requires active participation in all aspects of our lives. Although we may never arrive at the fullness of authenticity, we may strive toward this ideal by working to heal the splits that exist between facets of our selves and between the world and ourselves.

WEARING MASKS

Striving to be the selves others desire rather than our real selves, we wear masks that serve to hide the true features of our desires and feelings. Carl Jung spoke of the *persona* or mask as a compromise between the individual and society. This mask, based on that which we appear to be, represents a compromise negotiated between the demands of the environment and our needs. Our ability to adjust to the needs of both our external and internal worlds allows us to wear our *persona* lightly, as there is plenty of elasticity in the structure to allow for flexible functioning. Should our *persona* grow rigid and stiffen, however, it becomes a grown-on mask behind which we shrivel, emptied of all spontaneity and creativity.

Wearing masks may lead to the creation of a false or inauthentic self, based on our desire to be seen as respectable. While there is merit in making ourselves socially acceptable and attractive to others, there may come a time when societal demands bind us too tightly. The mask we wore easily in earlier years may appear inauthentic in light of our later psychological and moral development. Sometimes it becomes necessary to leave behind a persona that has served us well at an earlier phase of life in order to move on to a higher level of integrity more suited to the stage of psycholog-

Integrity in communication discloses and gives voice to fundamental aspects of our ordinary experience and displays the reality of ourselves for others to encounter.

ical or moral life we are attempting to reach.

We may recognize the dropping of an inauthentic persona when a person leaves behind a career that may have been financially rewarding but unfulfilling in order to take up work that offers less material security but feeds the spirit. A person moving toward a moral stance that demands behavior contrary to the mores of the time is another instance in which an outworn persona drops away. Think, for example, of someone, raised in a society with rigid codes of socially prescribed behavior, who has come to recognize the society's systemic sinfulness. Attempting to put this moral insight into practice will almost inevitably lead to a major change in the way this person is viewed by his or her peers. S/he is likely to be ostracized by those who find such a change in attitude and behavior an affront to traditional values and ways of doing things. The price of creating a more fully developed, authentic self may be quite costly under such circumstances.

It is not only an affront to our values that can cause difficulties in relationships for the person of integrity. At times, strong affirmation of supposedly shared beliefs brings about reactions of dismay. Such an affirmation serves to make us uncomfortably aware of the fact that all too often we pay only lip service to our ideals. Finding ourselves forced to confront the limits of our willingness to embody our values and sacrifice for them can lead us to dismiss, if not denigrate, the person of integrity. We might think of any number of saints whose radical espousal of gospel values earned the disapproval of parents and friends alike. And what is our response to persons like Dorothy Day whose lifestyles challenge the complacent middle-class living many of us prefer? Frequently we view such persons with ambivalence at best, acting quickly to reduce the dissonance that exists between our stated beliefs and values and our lifestyles.

If the discrepancy between the self created in response to the demands of others and the real self becomes too large, we often experience a lack of felt integrity. Some of us express this in terms of feeling like an imposter. Others might say: "I am not myself." Learning to trust the experiencing self, owning our feelings, is a necessary step toward recovering our sense of integrity. Having claimed a sense of self that is based on congruence of thought, feeling and action, the maturing person, like the child, trusts and uses the wisdom of her or his total organism, but at this stage of life in a knowing way, with awareness.

Developing an awareness of our feelings, living them and sharing them appropriately fosters communication from the heart. Communication of this sort puts those listening in touch with similar realities in their own lives, establishing a sympathetic resonance. Integrity in communication discloses and gives voice to fundamental aspects of our ordinary experience and displays the reality of ourselves for others to encounter.

Eastern traditions, such as Zen Buddhism, recognize this aspect of integrity and identify congruence with *amoha*, one of the *sweet roots* cultivated in order to promote personal growth. The person who is congruent no longer lives a life based on confusion or deception. Instead, the congruent person is clear about what s/he is and does not conceal it. Rather than rigidly clinging to fixed views, which constitute a form of denial of reality, the congruent person flows from moment to moment, achieving a wisdom that affirms and understands reality.

Having been conditioned since childhood to develop a false self that lives a life of conformity to societal dictates, how might we find our genuineness, our authentic selves? How achieve the sort of congruence that allows for an integrated expression of our thoughts and feelings in our actions? In other words, "How might we come home to ourselves and reclaim our integrity?"

Even the ability to ask such a question suggests that we have already begun our journey home. Having lived in a far country for many years, we need to prepare ourselves for the journey by learning to live with awareness, letting go of the comfort of cherished myths that serve to distort our vision of the real. Awareness or mindfulness is a discipline that has long been practiced in the Eastern traditions although certain elements

have been part of Western practice as well. Awareness of breathing, for example, serves to slow us down so that we might become attuned to ourselves and our surroundings as they are. Even an elementary level of mindfulness can enhance self-control as it enables us to regain contact with the flow of our experience. A number of books are available that incorporate Eastern meditation practices with Western traditions of meditation. *Sadhana* by Anthony De Mello, for example, contains many exercises designed to promote awareness of sound, of breathing, and of the body. The writings of Thich Nhat Hanh also speak eloquently of mindfulness and offer exercises to assist in developing this quality. Although we must not anticipate quick change at the outset of our practice, we will eventually—if the discipline is maintained—find a new power in our daily lives that we have never before noticed.

Other forms of prayer also have the power to assist us to become more integrated persons because in prayer we say who in fact we are—not who we should be or who we wish we were. We speak out of our many voices, those we know well and those deeper voices we may not yet identify as our own. Over time, we begin to hear our true self emerge from the numerous voices of our false selves, our shadow selves, our imposters and our masks. We hear our goodness, kindness and compassion. We also hear the voices of our personal sin that speak of our envy, hesitance, pride and fear. If we are willing to speak our minds and hearts in prayer and tolerate the silence of real listening, we will, over time, hear the various bits and pieces of ourselves make themselves present, demanding our attention, leading us to our inner depths.

INTEGRITY AND THE DIMENSION OF TIME

Recognition of integrity sustained in time plays a significant role in the celebration of anniversaries. It is heartening to witness two people who have loved each other faithfully for forty, fifty, or sixty years. No marriage is without its moments of darkness and pain, yet many people grow through these periods, embodying love and fidelity as they do so. Those who have chosen religious life or priesthood give a similar type of witness. Certainly, anyone currently celebrating fifty or more years of profession or ordination has lived through tremendous changes and experienced significant losses. Their lives, spent more in the darkness of faith than in the full light of certainty, are exemplars of

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integrity sustained in time. And who can doubt the effort required to live a life of sobriety when faced with the temptations to addiction that surround us? To these people rightly belong the words of Isaiah: (11:5): “Integrity is the loincloth round (their) waists, faithfulness the belt about (their) hips.”

Dedicated service rendered over a number of years also speaks to us of integrity sustained in time. We see adults who have sacrificed many personal desires, even marriage, to care for ill or aged parents or to raise the children of their deceased siblings. We see sisters or brothers who have loyally supported a sibling through a lifetime of physical or emotional illnesses. We celebrate friendships that have endured over many years, strengthened with the sharing of the joys and sorrows of a lifetime. The workplace also offers us numerous examples of such integrity. For many people, their work has become a spiritual path that serves to nurture and express their integrity.

Integrity sustained in time becomes even more important as we move into our elder years. Realizing that our pasts constitute more of our lives than our futures, we undertake the tasks of the last stages of life, attempting to reintegrate all the themes that played prominent roles in earlier periods of our lives. During this time we might picture ourselves as weavers, shuttling the threads of our unique life back and forth on the loom of time, seeking to integrate mature forms of the virtues proper to each preceding life stage. Thus, hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love, and caring are worked into a comprehensive sense of wisdom, the crowning virtue of a life well lived and a vantage point from which to live out the time that remains to us.

Development of integrity sustained in time involves acceptance of the past, which we cannot alter, and the future, which we cannot see clearly. We are challenged to engage in self-questioning and to accept

There are times, however, when faithfulness to the integrity of the self requires us to leave a situation or relationship.

the anxiety aroused by deep honesty. To do so is a sign of growth, for it is not easy to face those instances in our lives when we have compromised or failed outright to act in accord with the values of our deepest self. Our willingness to tolerate the discomfort aroused by such questioning allows us to set the record straight, to bring order to our lives, and, to the extent possible, undo the damage caused by our lapses in integrity. Often it is a sense of regret, even of despair, that prompts us to achieve true contrition for past failings and opens for us the opportunity to live what remains of our lives with greater honesty. Perhaps it is only then that we can acknowledge the integrity of God, the gift of faithful love that endures forever, joining with our efforts at living lives of integrity.

IS THIS REALLY INTEGRITY?

It may be helpful to distinguish between genuine integrity and a stubbornness that might keep us firmly on a path that failed to honor our truest selves in the first place. For example, a career choice selected for its irritant value to our parents and maintained in a spirit of animosity reflects a person stuck in adolescent rebellion rather than a deep level of integrity. We also need to distinguish between integrity and the stability of a neurotic choice. Examples of this sort of neurotic stability can be seen in marriages or other relationships built and maintained by co-dependent needs, financial considerations, or the like. Although the relationship is neither life-giving nor life-affirming, it is maintained because the cost of terminating it seems too high. This is not to say that persons who find themselves in less than ideal situations cannot make a choice to remain in the marriage, relationship, or career. Often, it is at

the point when all the negative factors of the situation are honestly admitted that we can choose a course that honors our integrity while maintaining the relationship or the career path.

There are times, however, when faithfulness to the integrity of the self requires us to leave a situation or relationship. When faced with the decision to break either the vows of marriage or those of religious life, we need to be deeply honest with ourselves. Such steps ought to be taken only after rigorous soul searching and listening humbly to the advice of those in authority. We might view this sort of action not as seeking release from vows but release from a lifestyle. An honest divorce, for example, might well permit a couple to continue to love each other, albeit at a distance. Those seeking to leave priesthood or religious life might recall the need of all Christians to observe the Beatitudes that are at the heart of the religious vows. We are never exempt from the obligation to live lives characterized by poverty of spirit and purity of heart, no matter if we are members of religious orders or not.

The breaking of a vow, then, must represent a movement toward wholeness and greater integrity. It cannot be an escape, for if it is, the situation from which we have tried to escape will simply repeat itself in another form. We might think, for example, of persons who have entered into multiple marriages or a series of short-lived relationships. It would seem, many times, that insufficient learning or personal development occurred in the boundaries of the first partnership and that the unconscious needs or projections that contributed to the death of the marriage were brought, unaltered, to subsequent unions with equally disastrous results.

REFRAMING

As we actively engage in the tasks of later life there is a tendency to reframe life events, particularly those originally experienced as negative and as sources of discontent or distress. This seems to represent a process of reintegration and recasting of those events so that they take on new meanings as part of our entire life. Engaging in this process suggests that traumatic events have been put into perspective and integrated into the total fabric of our lives. Reframing also points to our development of a sense of self and personal integrity sustained in time that enables us to deal effectively with points of discontinuity or disjunction in our lives. It helps us recognize certain events or time peri-

ods as "dark nights" that served a purgative purpose that can only now be fully appreciated.

Among the developmental tasks of later life, our reworking of identity contains elements that are very closely related to the concept of integrity sustained in time. We highlight characteristics and qualities that have contributed to our sense of self over the years and use these as guides to establishing the self we wish to be as we move into our later years. Personal commitments to beliefs and attitudes, activities and relationships are also significant in maintaining a sense of personal integrity and continuity. Articulating the values that have served as our anchoring points and identifying the ways they have been expressed throughout our lifetime are important features of the reintegration of our identities and of our sense of integrity.

INTEGRITY AND TRAVAIL

There are some who would deny that living a life of integrity sometimes requires painful sacrifices. Because integrity expresses the wholeness of the person, they would say that what an outsider might perceive as sacrifice is really an act of fulfilled intention and unified will. Rather than sacrificing happiness for the sake of good, the integrated person would seem to be sacrificing lesser pleasures for greater ones. In this light, then, integrity is not perceived as a standard upheld only at great cost but as a prolonged and focused delight, a form of self-actualization.

Others, noting that the sense of wholeness is also, at one end of the spectrum, a sense of pain, seem a bit more realistic, at least to those of us who do not always live our lives at the topmost levels of self-actualization. Rather than deny the pain associated with making choices that demand a high level of integrity, we might see the pain as a positive signal, a sign that some great prize is at hand. We might choose to think of such pain as *travail*, a participation in the birthing process. And what greater prize than to birth and come to a mature appreciation of our true self, to recognize that we have indeed deserved the crown of wisdom through our bearing much fruit.

Experiencing travail as we concern ourselves with the tasks of later life opens us to become rich in the pain that often precedes enlightenment and a breakthrough into freedom. Our experience of travail brings a sense of satisfaction and delight, a fundamental self-valuation that enables us to reconnect with our world through mature relationships and a sense of transcendence. It opens us to the great virtue of hope that serves to bring our lives full circle. Hope links our initial experiences of trust to a profound sense that while we stand at the end of this life we are, after all, only on the threshold of a new creation. It allows us to pray fervently in praise of wisdom:

For at last you will find the rest she gives,
and she will be changed into joy for you.
(Sirach 6:28).

RECOMMENDED READING

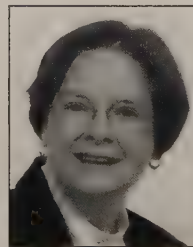
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"I'd Like" or "I Have to"?

THOUGHTS ON PERSONAL FREEDOM



George Wilson, S.J.

A few years ago I was talking to a friend who had been elected to the leadership team of her province. I asked her how things were going. She said, "We're making progress. We have picked off all of our sisters who were drinking or using medications too much. We've gotten them into solid rehabilitation programs. Now we're starting to go after the ladies who spend three or four hours in front of the boob tube every night."

The concrete anecdote provides a good opening for some reflection on the difference between healthy desire and unhealthy compulsion.

Perhaps the first thing in the story that might cause us to sit up and pay attention is the implication that the realm of unhealthy attachments is not limited to those forms of compulsion that are socially disparaged. Over the years American society has gradually developed a consensus concerning the destructiveness of addiction to alcohol and drugs and, to a lesser degree of intensity, to gambling. (A consensus on guns is apparently light years away.) Relating that reality to the original story, I would venture the bet that an unusual predilection for much TV-watching would generally be met with "Well, what's the problem?"

The point is that we can become inordinately attached (read:

addicted) to *anything*. And the fact that the attachment would be seen as relatively harmless by our society should not be the determining factor in how we evaluate what's going on. The question should not be "How is this viewed by my local culture?" but rather "What is it doing to *me*, to my spirit?" And then, by implication, what is it doing to my *community and its mission*?" Not how it's viewed but how harmful it is.

Readers of this journal will quickly note that I am circling around the Principle and Foundation of the *Spiritual Exercises*. The kinds of things that can become inordinate attachments start out as *creatures*. As goods. We must never lose sight of the fact that they are good in themselves and can be of service in the work of the kingdom. It's not a matter of denigrating these goods. Let's leave that to those much-caricatured preachers who fulminate about "drinkin' and dancin' and cussin' and he-in'-n-she-in.'" The goods remain goods. What we need to explore is the way they contribute to or impede our spiritual growth.

SUBJECT AND OBJECTS

It's a matter of relationship. There are two poles: myself as subject and the object which attracts me. Since the two poles remain no matter what I do (I remain myself and that spiffy computer remains just a computer), what happens when the relationship shifts and becomes noxious? The computer or the TV or the *Sunday Times* or the shopping mall or *American Idol* will still be out there unchanged no matter how I decide to relate to it. (I'm spreading my targets around, to illustrate that none of us is untouched by the tendency I'm trying to understand.) The change must originate not in the object (which could be a person, by the way) but in me.

At this point I must note that I am not a therapist. It should be clear that I do not pretend to the competence required to understand and deal with all that constitutes full-blown, pathological addictions. My target might be described, rather, as the ordinary garden-variety neurotic attachments that seem simply to arrive with the humanity of each and every one of us. Perhaps this is the place to note also that precisely because they *aren't* matter for societal disapproval these attachments may be all the more difficult to detect. As the process unfolds and the pattern becomes ingrained, each one becomes simply a part of our personal wallpaper—difficult to change because it doesn't even engage our attention. There are

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too many other realities more compelling.

So while acknowledging the possibility that all sorts of deeper psychological, or even biological, mechanisms—genetic make-up, family dynamics, traumatic events, projections of every kind, etc.—might be at work, I propose that we look at some realities that are more accessible to our choices for growth.

IT'S ALL ABOUT FREEDOM

However they originate, the fundamental reality or characteristic feature of these attachments is that they diminish our freedom. As they take over, we become less and less able to "just say no" to them. When presented with a potential choice to respond to the attractive object, we discover that the playing field is not even. The attractive option, as inconsequential as it may seem (can anything be less consequential than playing Free Cell?), so occupies the field of our attention that in effect there is no choice taking place. For that moment the possibility of doing something different is not on the menu. Our response becomes automatic, mechanical. There is no freedom, no choice, no decision, because those possibilities all suppose that we find ourselves presented with multiple available options. And in the case of an unfree compulsion there may indeed "objectively" be other options "out there," but in effect they don't really exist for the one so caught.

Does it need to be said that one of the prime conditions for spiritual maturity is the presence of interior freedom? We are called by the Lord to stand within this amazing collection of created goods, to be as present to it all as possible, and then choose with full freedom where we will put our energies to work in this world. The ultimate root of our call is that we are made in the image and likeness of the God who freely chose to create this particular collection of goods we call the world rather than another, out of love.

Free choice is not simple and it is not easy.

I just used the expression “to *be present*” to this moment. The reality is that disordered attachments diminish that ability to stand open to the fullness of the moment. Parts of reality are blocked out and made inaccessible by the power of the dominating impulse. We are present to only one facet of the full reality of the moment. And yet it is only when we confront the totality of the situation we find ourselves in, with *all* of its competing attractions up front and personal, that we can make the free choices that make us responsible agents. And responsibility and accountability are the only conditions that befit the dignity bestowed on us in our creation. In freedom we become our own person, able to sustain the aloneness that always and inevitably accompanies personal choice. To achieve that freedom we have to do two things in the same moment. We have to hold in consciousness all those attractions (the “goods,” in Ignatian terms) that are like hungry children clamoring for our attention and favorable response, and then actively resist (read: put to death for this moment) all but one of them. Free choice is not simple and it is not easy.

ONE RESPONSE TO COMPLEXITY: HABITUAL BEHAVIOR

From experience it seems safe to say that it is all but humanly impossible to live at every moment at the peak of conscious freedom as I have just described. The demand for such full attention to all possible options at every moment would drain our limited psychic resources very quickly. If we expended on every action the concentrated energy put out by a three-year-old trying to tie his or her shoes each morning we would accomplish precious little. Only as much as the three-year-old does, in fact.

So in order to increase our capability to meet the greater complexities of more mature living, we develop ways of transforming those quite necessary tasks into routines. We organize our energies in such a way that it requires no psychic attention to perform them. We reduce the energies required, by developing habitual patterns so that we can eventually tie our shoes while simultaneously composing the great American novel or plotting a faculty revolt. If asked whether we tied our shoes this morning, we can only respond, “I must have; but I don’t remember doing it.”

Developing automatic responses like that is of course essential for getting on with life. Over time we can relegate whole gobs of daily living to the level of habitual response. I have never forgotten the experience Fr. Bill Wade, S.J., shared with us Jesuit students in a psychology class. He had for years said Mass at 6:30 each morning for a group of nuns. After distributing Communion to the regular community he would take the Eucharist to the sisters in the infirmary. One morning, when he returned from the infirmary and was putting the ciborium back in the tabernacle he genuflected, turned around, and was prepared to begin distribution all over. The sisters had to tell him that he had already given Communion. He had performed the action for so many years that it had become a series of reflex actions, a long chain of stimulus-response: genuflect equals open tabernacle. He was on cruise control with no real freedom to change course. He would have become free only if something out of the ordinary had jogged his attention and compelled him to stop and choose the next step.

The story can help us to appreciate the difference between two levels of more or less routine behavior. Automatisms are patterns that have been relegated to the limbic level of the brain, operating “below” the range of any genuine consciousness. Habits, on the other hand, though they no longer claim our energies the way they did when we first began to develop them, function nonetheless with a low but real degree of consciousness and control. Each time we exercise them there is a momentary awareness that we could just as well choose a different path. Once we have formed the habit and grown accustomed to its practice it might take only a small expenditure to change course but there is an accompanying intuitive sense that we can choose to do so if we wish. In an habitual mode of acting the unchosen options remain on the periphery of consciousness; it may have become easier to hold their

attractiveness at bay, but we are aware of them. Action flowing from acquired virtue may be relatively easy but it is not automatic. The trick in life is to determine the matters we can safely allow to become automatic and those that demand the conscious attention needed if we are to function as free, moral subjects. Unfortunately we have the capability to become so proficient at generating routines that even more significant components of life than shoe-tying are allowed to become automatic. It's seven o'clock so we're in our Lazyboy ready for *Jeopardy*. Without thinking.

WE LIVE WITHIN A PUSH-PULL SOCIAL CONTEXT

I mentioned the aloneness of personal responsibility earlier. That raises a paradox, which in its turn illuminates the complexity of our ascent to freedom. Each of us indeed bears the sole responsibility for our choices, and yet we always have to make those choices within the context of the communities that have shaped our evaluative skills. We are social animals and that means that the objects proposed for our choice do not swim into our consciousness solely "on their own." They arrive already weighted with the valence attached to them by others. They bear price tags, as it were. If those who did the weighting are our parents or immediate family, or others with whom we have shared daily intimacy for years, the power of the attached valuations can be vast, all but obliterating our freedom to choose otherwise. We are products of all the cultures in whose waters we have swum. Free but with conditioned freedom. To use another image: we grow into adulthood with scripts we have learned although no one ever really "taught" them to us, and we fool ourselves if we think it is easy to re-write our lines. But that's what growth in freedom is all about.

Our social environments are multiple and they are semiotic. They send us messages. We are constantly being presented (a better word might be "bombarded") with scripts telling us what we ought to think and what we should choose. They are designed to draw us to move some particular option to the top of our accustomed set of priorities. To understand them we frequently use the metaphor of *pressure*: "Oh, you simply *have to* see the latest film of (you fill in the blank: perhaps Sean Connery? Eddie Murphy? Kate Winslet?)"

One of the environments we swim in (frequently depicted as a malicious influence) is, of course, the world of commercial advertising. We are awash in such

messages. Every possible form of business presents itself as absolutely needed if we are to function in our society. (Perhaps more significant than the sex or violence we see "up front" on TV is the power of the 22 minutes of every TV hour "pressuring" us to buy some product or service—which we think we are not "paying" any attention to. Our systems seem wired to be alert to signals of sex or abusive behavior, while a spontaneous trip to the mall seems quite innocent. "Not gonna buy anything." It's "relaxing," you know.)

The power of the world of advertising has been worked over in many books and articles (which is not to say that just because we have read about it we have acquired the skills to resist it). My own experience is that in weighing the power of advertising we may be inclined to overlook the social networks that actually turn the potential attraction of the advertised product into a compelling option. For example, an academic might have ignored any number of ads, but let a colleague remark how much he or she was able to accomplish with a spiffy new high-speed gadget and the sale is all but made. We are pack animals after all, and the need to fit in lies deep in our psyches. The solidarity which is so important to our well-being as humans brings with it trade-offs in terms of potential obstacles to personal freedom.

A FINAL PRESSURE: THE COMMUNITY AND ITS LEADERS

One of the forces that can make the achievement of free choice for a religious more difficult is the reality of community living itself. How can that be?

Let's say that a given religious, man or woman, genuinely wants to live a simple life-style, to be as free as reasonably possible from the pressures of upward mobility that characterize American culture. Ironically, life in community can make that option more difficult to live out. Communities today have leaders who, precisely because they see themselves as called to create a good life for their members, have an eye out for enhancements that can ease the burdens of the apostolate and community living itself. Result: a community TV that is still quite adequate for viewing will morph into high-definition, on a flat-and *large*-screen. The dining-room fare begins to include more options than would be evident at the table of the biological family of most members of the community.

Each of the objects of such leadership decisions are goods in themselves. And it's true that the individ-

ual religious remains free to make personal choices within the array presented by the community (although in some instances it can require asking for a special menu). In any case, there are three common outcomes. First, it may simply require from the individual a little extra energy to live the simple style professed in the community's mission statement. Second, the continued presence of amenities may gradually become uncritically accepted. The communal existence of the group runs on automatic pilot. Things once seen as merely desirable become "of course." And the third possible outcome—hopefully less common, but we have all seen it—is that what was originally merely desirable becomes *expected*. What was at first simply an objective improvement becomes subjectively an entitlement. Want becomes need. When that happens we are far indeed from freedom.

WHAT TO DO?

When it comes to a community's tendency toward an ever higher standard of living, the mere proclamation of policies on simple living won't cut it. There is no substitute for the difficult process of communal reflection and decision. Standards may be enunciated in congregational policies, but if they are genuine policies and not mechanistic rules, the burden of interpreting their consequences for the concrete local group falls on those who must live with the choices. Whether the individual members in a local community feel genuinely free to express discomfort when their personal standards might challenge the group's prevailing thinking is itself an indicator of the maturity of the group. Ironically, though, the burden of creating such a healthy climate of free disagreement falls largely on the shoulders of precisely the leader who is drawn to provide the best in the first place. The benevolence of the leader can lead to "decisions" that happen by default.

My purpose in raising the element of community pressure is simply to capture the process by which options that begin as desirable turn into needs or expectations. To suggest proposals for improvement of the community's decision-making would take us beyond the scope of the present article. But what can we say to help the individual deal with the human tendency to allow even serious matters to be controlled by inertia and unfreedom?

Over the years both individuals as well as society at large have attempted to use negative measures to deal

with the addicting potential of comfortable options. The success record is spotty at best. On the individual level we have experienced the inadequacy of rigid ascetical practices of earlier eras, while on the national level, the policy of Prohibition probably created more unintended negative effects than positive. Nancy Reagan's famous "Just Say No" campaign fared little better. Today we have programs aimed at getting teenage girls to pledge to their fathers in a public ceremony that they will remain celibate until marriage. There are indications that such programs create as much hypocrisy and deceit as abstinence (not because the young women are malicious but because they are developmentally too young to make such an absolute commitment and then they are compelled to dissemble when they fail).

Experience seems to show that it is only the power of a positive commitment that can control the attraction to freedom-reducing behaviors. People with a focused sense of mission are not easily sidetracked or lulled into wasted energies. Mission creates a heightened sense of awareness. When attractions that might otherwise tend to dominate consciousness arrive on scene they do not find an empty slate. They are met, instead, by a "preoccupying" alternative that is already well rooted. And people who have a commitment to mission find great help in a practice such as the examination of conscience or the Buddhist practice of mindfulness. Such attentiveness helps to lift into consciousness behaviors that might otherwise slide imperceptibly into a routine that encroaches inappropriately on our freedom. A conscious "yes" to an attractive mission or goal makes the "no" to distracting options less likely. The choice for life makes it possible to put to death an otherwise quite attractive diversion.

The strongest commitment of all arises from the desire to respond in love to a Lord who loves us first without reserve. Jesus called himself "the truth" which confers radical freedom. And Paul came to the realization that if we are seized by the love of Christ, nothing else can get in the way.



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Integrity Through Twelve-Step Spirituality

Jim Harbaugh, S.J.



The word “integrity,” or synonyms like “wholeness,” do not occur much in the fundamental literature of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), the “Big Book” (the AA “Torah”) or the “12 X 12” (a kind of Talmud or commentary on the AA program). But I would like to argue that the idea of integrity, if not the word, is fundamental to AA thought. In the first section I will show how it emerges from AA’s basic insights. In the remaining two sections I will show how integrity is achieved specifically by “working” AA’s Twelve Steps. Let me stress from the beginning that no one speaks for AA; what follows are my own reflections, based on a reading of these AA texts, and spelled out in other books I have produced.

PART ONE: “A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY” (FROM STEP FIVE)

All through this article I will be using “integrity” and “wholeness” interchangeably. As a corollary of this, I believe that to call something, like a medical protocol, “holistic” is to ascribe to it a commitment to see problems and solutions in terms of the whole human person, to see them with “integrity.” Here I submit that there are two interrelated ways in which AA’s concept of alcoholism and recovery are “holistic.”

First, AA was revolutionary when it posited in the Big Book that alcoholics are “bodily and mentally different from [their] fellows” (30). While such a notion had been advanced at times in the history

While AA literature doesn't speak much of "integrity," or "wholeness," even a casual reading of it will evince a strong focus on "spirituality."

of alcoholism treatment, in the late 1930s, at the time the Big Book was written, the prevailing view was that alcoholism was (exclusively) a "psychological" disorder. Rather like schizophrenia in the 1950s, addictions were thought to be caused primarily by psychological trauma and/or mal-adaptations to life. One inference drawn from these views, which has by no means disappeared in the years since, was that if the alcoholic's conflicts were successfully addressed in therapy, the alcoholic would then be able to drink normally.

The Big Book goes out of its way to insist that it was written by recovering alcoholics, and not by medical or psychiatric experts. But it nonetheless stoutly asserts the writers' belief that alcoholism is a "disease" of the whole person, including the body. I would argue that this belief, derived from the writers' intuition from their own experience, has since been abundantly supported by developments in the production of images of the living brain and from the discovery of the role of brain neurotransmitters in the body's response to drugs, including alcohol. Just as with psychiatric conditions like depression and schizophrenia, so in the case of addiction there is now abundant evidence of the biological aspect of this pathology.

By the same token, in the years since AA began there has been a growing commitment to "holistic" protocols in the treatment of most significant "diseases," and not just "mental" illnesses. While "managed" care may not always readily finance holistic approaches for those who are ill, most medical practitioners would agree that long-term outcomes are superior when a "holistic" protocol is employed, one that embraces lifestyle changes, group support, medications, individual counseling, and so on. This would

apply particularly to the diseases that are the leading causes of death around the world: cancer, heart disease, and HIV. What is true of "physical" illnesses is also true of "psychological" sickness. While there has been a significant shift to the use of psychotropic medications in the treatment of mood disorders and schizophrenia, studies also have consistently shown that a combination of medication and talk therapy, individual and/or group, works even better than medication alone.

So AA's commitment to a "holistic" concept of the problem in question, alcoholism, has been justified by medical and psychiatric trends since AA began. And AA's proposed solution to the problem is "holistic" as well—particularly if I am granted the following point.

While AA literature doesn't speak much of "integrity," or "wholeness," even a casual reading of it will evince a strong focus on "spirituality." Words like "spirit" or "spiritual" occur very frequently. Indeed, this emphasis has earned AA a lot of criticism over the years: in as demotic a site as the phone book Yellow Pages, one can find treatment centers for addiction which offer a choice between "spiritual" and "non-spiritual" treatment. This language is often tied to God-talk, although AA literature stresses that this is "God as [one] understands God." Just as AA leaves the definition of "God," or indeed the use or non-use of the word itself, up to the individual addict, so words like "spirit" and "spiritual" are never given an "official" definition of any kind.

I suspect that in 1939 "spiritual" may have been employed rather than "religious" so that AA might be open to people of any religious background, or none. But I also contend that "spiritual" can be taken to mean more than "not-religious." I think it makes sense to speak of the "spirit" of a person as that person's "wholeness," that person's "integrity."

Here it is worth noting that one of the thinkers who, at something of a distance, influenced the content of the Big Book was Carl Jung. Another was William James. An anecdote in the Big Book (26-28) invokes Jung as a proponent of "vital spiritual experiences" (27) as a necessary foundation for recovery from alcoholism. While the Big Book does not refer otherwise to Jung's thought, one could flesh out this concept of "vital spiritual experiences" with some other Jungian concepts. Particularly in Jung's study of symbols there is an emphasis on circles, like mandalas or the serpent swallowing its own tail, as symbols for wholeness. In turn, wholeness, or "individuation," is seen as the goal of psychological processing.

The use of “spiritual” language in AA literature carries with it an inchoate commitment to seeking “wholeness” or “integrity” as a lifelong aim. This literature employs a more traditional, more American vocabulary: the 12 X 12 talks of “perfection” (in Step Six) or of “character-building” (in Step Seven) as the ultimate goal of recovery. But in the end it comes to the same thing. Nor is this “integrity” restricted to psycho-physiological health or to the kind of “enlightened” state one aspires to in a meditation practice. The whole focus of the Twelve Steps is on the achievement of “integrity” in the moral sense that it typically bears in ordinary speech.

Indeed, another criticism of the AA program, and specifically of the Twelve Steps that encapsulate that program, is that they introduce ethical questions into matters where they don’t belong. Consider for example a popular text on alcoholism, Milam and Ketchum’s *Under the Influence*. This book strongly endorses the biological features of alcoholism, which, as I mentioned above, was one of AA’s most remarkable insights. However, when this book considers the Twelve Steps (in Ch. 9), it becomes very uneasy, and suggests that, instead of examining one’s moral failings, as in Step Five, one should rather examine whether one is taking one’s vitamins properly, a hallmark of Milam-inspired treatment.

I argue on the contrary that AA’s insistence on moral growth as the chief task of the recovering person is another stroke of genius rather than a mistake. If one has found a new life in recovery, what better task than to see how far one can take that life in the direction of human wholeness? In the rest of this article I hope to show in detail how the Steps can be interpreted as a recipe for seeking moral wholeness (Steps Four-Twelve), based on a fundamental sense of one’s worthiness for such a project (Steps One-Three).

PART TWO: STEPS ONE-THREE—A SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

As I suggested above, the founders of AA shared a belief, which they claimed to derive from William James and Carl Jung, that some kind of spiritual transformation had been for them, and could be for others, the key to recovery from alcoholism. In its most compact form, this insight appears in the first three of the Twelve Steps.

Why begin with such a transformation, rather than proceeding at once to moral self-improvement, if integrity is the goal of the Steps? I think this is another happy feature of the AA program. For centuries people

If one has found a new life in recovery, what better task than to see how far one can take that life in the direction of human wholeness?

had tried to help alcoholics by moral suasion. Since these people were typically not alcoholic, their stance was that of a morally superior person trying to convince a moral inferior—the alcoholic—of the latter’s degeneracy. Since alcoholics are full of shame, despite our feeble attempts to brazen out our condition, shaming us produces a “coals to Newcastle” effect. What AA happened upon was the idea that, before undertaking moral self-scrutiny, alcoholics would gain a sense of their essential worth, grounded in something or someone greater than themselves. Let’s examine the first three steps in detail to see how this sense is evoked and strengthened.

The First Step, in its AA form, is this: “We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.” Some people, particularly thinkers sensitive to women’s psychology, criticize this step on the grounds that deeply disheartened people are not helped by being encouraged to believe they are powerless. I would counter that it is essential reality therapy to admit you are powerless over something if that is in fact the case. This is particularly true of biological facts. While some, for example those who subscribe to Christian Science or New Age beliefs, hold that the mind can or should dictate to the body, this often doesn’t work well. My mind may tell my body not to get drunk, but if a certain amount of alcohol gets to my brain, drunk is what I will get.

Western notions of mastering difficulties may not necessarily be the best response to physical facts. A more useful approach, as in Step One, is something like Taoism, the ancient Chinese spiritual tradition. The Tao is “The Way Things Are.” And so Taoism is about grasping and accepting how things actually are for you. Even if things are desperate for you, it’s better to admit it than futilely and repetitively try to “manage” as if they weren’t.

A key word in Step One, which is also to be understood at the beginning of each subsequent Step, is

If this particular problem can be so remarkably solved by an openness to a larger hope, why not surrender one's other problems to the same process?

"We." The solution to the desperation of one's circumstances is already implicit here. To accept those circumstances as one member of a community already improves the circumstances. Spiritually this is the first hint that one is not alone—is not in fact only "one." We will see this trajectory again and again in the Steps that follow, and in the leap from the Steps to the Traditions: from existential isolation to a deep sense of belonging that paradoxically makes the individual one whole for the first time. (The Twelve Traditions are principles meant to guide the relationships between AA groups, and between AA as a body and all those outside it. Developed during the 1940s, they were "promulgated" in 1950 and are studied in the second part of the 12 X 12. I recommend them as a fascinating example of solid principles for groups attempting to facilitate the spiritual growth of their members.)

My take on Step One is congruent with Bill W's understanding of it as "deflation at depth." The traditional spiritual term is "humility," not, as Bill noted, a popular word in these post-Nietzschean times (see 12 X 12, 70, on Step Seven). A moral and psychological version of the fruit of this Step might run like this: recovery begins by abandoning the hugely inflated ego of the very immature. Or, to cite that gritty street philosopher, Dirty Harry Callahan: "A man's got to know his limitations."

Step Two is a response to the declaration of a personal crisis in Step One. Specifically, it's in Step Two that the notion is introduced that a spiritual transformation might help clean up the mess. It runs thus: "Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." I have always preferred the

formulation of this Step that Bill gives in the 12 X 12, because this latter describes this experience in what I consider the right *chronological* order: "Relieved of the alcohol obsession, their lives unaccountably transformed, they came to believe in a Higher Power, and most of them began to talk of God" (28).

What comes first, I think, is not a belief; this would not be very pragmatic, and a kind of Jamesian pragmatism characterizes the AA program. Rather, what comes first is "relief" from an "obsession." Anyone who has been a prey to an obsession—with using drugs, with an unavailable person, with their own misery—will know what it is to find relief, through medication, therapy, contact with a group, or (holistically) some combination of all these. The longer this relief goes on, the more one's life is "transformed": suddenly many things become possible. The first day I woke up in an alcoholism treatment unit, practically my first thought was that, if I no longer had to count on a cunningly concealed trail of liquor bottles, I could now go visit England (my doctoral dissertation had been on a British novelist).

After years of frustration, suddenly and "unaccountably" being relieved of an obsession will seem uncanny to you. There seems to be an obvious disproportion between what you are doing—homely and simple deeds, mostly, principally going to funky AA meetings—and the "unaccountably" huge changes that you are experiencing. In contexts like these, where suddenly there is a power that had never been there before, spiritual/religious language seems the most accurate.

Step Three generalizes Steps One and Two into a larger life-attitude. If this particular problem can be so remarkably solved by an openness to a larger hope, why not surrender one's other problems to the same process? The Step puts it this way: "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*" (*italics in original*).

Bill W. noted, apropos of Step Two, that "most" alcoholics, when they first got a sense that their lives were being "unaccountably transformed," "began to talk of God." He wrote this nearly 70 years ago; perhaps in our time many addicts and professional counselors will not want to "talk of God." The point is, I think, to find then some way to talk about experiences that reach to every corner of one's life, experiences of "unaccountable" change. A hundred years after James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*, our task is this: to find a way of talking about these matters that respects their power to heal.

In any case the point of Step Three is the action suggested: entrusting oneself to whatever has already begun to make sense of one's life. This action is practical, given the good results one has already gotten, as in Step Two. But it's also an act of faith and hope, a belief that one's life and one's desires ("will") can achieve a meaningful realization. In short, the first three Steps provide a solid foundation for a quest for personal integrity.

PART THREE: STEPS FOUR-NINE—THE USES OF ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT

In the previous section I tried to describe the "conversion" experience that the first three Steps are meant to bring about. As William James suggested, the only way really to assess the "integrity" of such a conversion experience is to consider the moral quality of the actions it produces. And that is the path the Steps follow. Now that the recovering person feels grounded in some larger truth, that person can undergo moral self-scrutiny without falling back into sterile shame. An Eriksonian version of this process would describe it as maturing from shame ("I am bad") to guilt ("I sometimes do bad things, but I can attempt to compensate for them").

Psychologists Lawrence Kohlberg, Carol Gilligan, and many others have described how a person's moral sense develops with age—unless the process is hampered by internal or external influences. I agree with those who believe that people in addicted milieus stop growing (or at least have their growth slowed) in every area, including morals. In recovery it will not then be enough to acquire a moral sense; that sense will have to develop, from the point where the person left off.

Steps Four and Five contain several elements conducive to this kind of growth. Step Four, "Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves," inculcates some hallmarks of adult ethical reflection. Foremost among these is the willingness by recovering persons to accept their part in damaged relationships, the point of "column four" in the schema for the Step suggested in the Big Book.

In columns one, two, and three, step-takers are to list the people they resent or fear, the actions of these people that inspired the resentment or fear, and what those actions threatened in the alcoholic (e.g., "Sex relations," "Self-esteem," "Security" (Big Book, 65). The fourth column answers the question, "Where were we [alcoholics] to blame?" (Big Book, 67). This is an adult middle way: between accepting no responsibility and blaming all one's problems on others on the one

Now that the recovering person feels grounded in some larger truth, that person can undergo moral self-scrutiny without falling back into sterile shame.

hand; and grabbing all the guilt as a way to hang on to enough shame to block any change on the other.

These two extremes are regressive in an adult, since they are children's defenses. When we encounter them in someone of adult years, we know their maturation somehow got snagged. In extreme cases, these are the people who can't be honest, who, according to the Big Book, have only a slim chance of achieving recovery (Big Book, 58). What they can't be honest about, I think, is precisely their capacity for evil. We call them sociopaths, in psychological language. Scott Peck, in his book of the same name, calls them the "people of the lie," and believes that this inability to be honest is true evil.

Step Five is, as the Big Book suggests (72), a crucial step in moral development, without which a person may return to drinking. The Step itself: "Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs." From the point of view of ethical development, what is crucial about this Step is that the person is trying to own up about who he or she is to some kind of quasi-parental wisdom figure. If that figure follows the directions in the 12 X12 for hearing a Fifth Step, she or he will admit to the same failings, in essence if not in detail. As Peter Brooks points out in his remarkable *Troubling Confessions*, it is not the forensic accuracy of the personal account being rendered that matters so much as the accepting attitude of the person listening to it.

In other words, recovering persons are being invited in this Step to accept their membership in the human race as a morally flawed but still-striving species. One of the qualities that makes guilt more mature than shame, as I noted above, is this realistic

To grow up morally is to realize 1) that the grown-ups are just human, morally and every other way; 2) that you're now one of them.

ability to acknowledge that one has done ill but is not therefore essentially bad. Failure to negotiate this developmental hurdle, with or without a Fifth Step, leaves one pretty much in the position of Nathaniel Hawthorne's Young Goodman Brown. Brown, an early New England Puritan, gets a lurid insight into the dark side of his human community: he sees (or dreams) that they are a coven of witches. Pragmatically, it scarcely matters whether it's a dream or not; he is miserable for the rest of his life, because he believes he alone can be good, and everyone around him is evil.

Children have an inflated and uninflected sense of the moral natures of the grown-ups around them. Those large beings are either monstrous or divine. To grow up morally is to realize 1) that the grown-ups are just human, morally and every other way; 2) that you're now one of them. Step Five is a good way to cement this realization, particularly if one's biological parents made it too easy to frame them as monsters or saints.

Steps Six and Seven might at first glance seem regressive. We might expect that the natural follow-up to a renewed moral sense would be vigorous efforts at self-improvement. I believe that Steps Six and Seven suggest a better path, in fact. Instead of summoning will power, recovering persons are urged to turn once again to God [as they understand God]. Specifically, the recovering are told to take this path. Step Six: "Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character." Step Seven: "Humbly asked him to remove our shortcomings."

As Bill notes in commenting on Step Seven in the 12 X 12, humility is a better standing-point for continued moral growth than a sense that one has been "fixed," and that all one need do now is try harder.

Trying harder is how many addicts got into trouble in the first place. Will power employed without a clear sense of The Way Things Are can produce disastrous results, as Bill's commentary on Step Three shows.

Invoking "God" in Steps Six and Seven is also wise. Remember that this is the new, adult "God" that the recovering person encountered in the first three Steps. Reference to this concept can save the person from relapsing into the moral absolutism that characterizes people stuck in addictions, the absolutism of Goodman Brown.

Steps Eight and Nine round off this model of moral growth. The final test of whether one has morally grown is whether one's relationships have improved. And the best way to test one's newfound sense of moral self-possession is to act on it with the people who have had a broad exposure to one's previous irresponsibility. The Steps put this more concretely: Step Eight—"Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all." And Step Nine—"Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

These Steps accomplish several things developmentally. You begin to rejoin the human race morally in Step Five, with just one unusually trustworthy person. In Steps Eight and Nine you bring that re-socialization to fulfillment with some of the most difficult people in your life. Your "amends" to them is in fact a statement that you want to act differently toward them; whether they agree to try or not is irrelevant to your moral growth.

Also, addicts, for all the harm they have caused, have a much livelier sense of the harm that has been done to them. Asking forgiveness of others gives them a new sense of the damage they have done. But it also helps them attain some compassion for the people who have harmed them. Asking others for forgiveness is one way to learn how hard it is for anyone to do.

The core of these Steps, I think, is compassion. Recovering persons are being asked imaginatively to put themselves into other people's hearts. And I agree with those moralists who consider compassion one of the great wellsprings of ethical thought and action, as it also is, with some qualifications, in Buddhism.

The remaining three Steps fill out a rather elegant structure. They form with the first nine Steps what literary scholars call a chiasmus, that is, a shape like: a b c c b a. These concluding Steps also put the insights of the first nine into a form suitable for everyday practice. So Step Ten continues the moral growth of Steps Four-Nine in everyday life. Step Eleven continues the spiri-

tual deepening of Steps Two and Three. And Step Twelve puts recovering persons back into the world of Step One, except that now this is meant both to show them how far they've come, and to increase their identification with the addicts who are coming into AA after them. Now they can lead neophytes through the path of moral and spiritual growth that they have followed.

I hope I have given a clear account of the moral outcomes of the Steps—a heightened sense of responsibility, a deepened compassion for others, and a willingness to be newly creative in one's relationships. It would not distort these outcomes to summarize them as "integrity." It's precisely the great depth, or the breadth, of the changes that the Steps are designed to bring about that leads me to call the AA program holistic, or—if you grant my definition of "spirit"—spiritual.

Even beyond a successful quest for moral integrity, the Twelve Steps in my judgment are a legitimate spiritual path. How legitimate? Anyone who has directed or even known a practitioner of these Steps can testify that this path leads easily on to many of the other great spiritual paths that have guided seekers for millennia. Some knowledge of this path, followed by thousands of seekers, is essential for all counselors and spiritual guides.

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Integrity Inside and Outside:

HOW PERSONAL INTEGRITY CAN SPARK THE MORAL IMAGINATION FOR PEACE



Kevin C. Krycka

Ego integrity, therefore, implies an emotional integration which permits participation by fellowship as well as acceptance of the responsibility of leadership.

- Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, p. 269.

Issues of global peace loom large on the horizon, threatening to dwarf our day-to-day activities and concerns. Like many, I am struck by the growing number of failed attempts at building lasting peace in our world. I wonder how all of us can be assured of a homeland in which we are able safely to pursue our goals and dreams. We seem to know why these situations are the way they are but not how to change them.

As Erikson suggests in the citation above, given sufficient emotional integration of personal and social experiences, we become able to enter into the responsibility of citizenship and leadership. What constitutes emotional integration has been the source of many arguments. Instead of looking for some litmus test of integration (as if there were a test or a single notion of integration), I look for the evidence-in-action that follows from integration and leads to involvement in service activities that build justice and peace initiatives.

It is common today among the natural sciences and even many social sciences to suggest that personal experience is mere subjectivity, which cannot speak to or inform larger societal issues. This position is challenged by the observation of the philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty: "All of us, all our experiences, all my thoughts, your thoughts and the thoughts of others are caught up in the fabric of one sole being."

As Merleau-Ponty suggests, already in us there is a connection between what seems "out there" and what we experience inside. Even though we typically view global and societal concerns as somehow unrelated to our interior life, the fact that we can sense or feel the complexity of any situation inside ourselves in a bodily way points to how our own experiences can lead to positive change in ourselves and in our lives. For instance, peace initiatives in Afghanistan and Israel are being designed on a model that involves deeply listening to one's bodily sensing and building fresh solutions to old problems from there. Listening to our inner bodily experience allows for attitudes of compassion, respect, and curiosity to develop. While in difficult, even dangerous, situations, attending and using our bodily felt sense can lead to new and unexpected results.

In Afghanistan, a Muslim man in conflict with a neighbor over water rights learned how to use his bodily sense to change his typical interactions with his neighbor. Their usual style of relating around this matter involved each stating his own position in the strongest language possible and getting stuck, not knowing how to proceed. Their arguments often ended with each angrily staring at the other with no way to solve the issue and then walking away frustrated. By listening first to his bodily sense of the conflict, instead of engaging in a conflictual and habitual style of relating with his neighbor, the man was able to see and appreciate his neighbor's point of view more clearly and then offer some ideas for resolving their water dispute.

It took one man to change this intractable situation. He was able to approach his neighbor differently after attending to his felt sense of the conflict. Of course, there were many important smaller steps involved here in their ensuing conversations that finally resulted in an amicable resolution.

The philosopher and psychologist Eugene Gendlin states, "Every living organism is a bodily interaction with an intricate situation and with the universe" (p. 3). Viewed from this perspective, global concerns are no longer somehow *impersonal*, that is, they are under-

standable and ultimately changeable from the personal and, most precisely, from the felt-level of experience.

In my example of the Muslim men in Afghanistan we can see that the resolution to a dispute over water started to come when one party turned his attention inward. Gendlin might say this man touched into the point of interaction with his neighbor with whom he had a difficult history. The negative history between them did not stop the process from going forward however. A solution to their dispute arose from the inside rather than from their typical manner of pitting one side against the other. Polarized and dichotomous thinking gave way as inner felt experience was touched and used productively to build a new solution to an old problem.

In this article, I trace how integrity, as a personally experienced reality, functions in building a form of citizenship that can excite the moral imagination for peace and justice in the public sphere. I have two case examples to illustrate how integrity functions in building an ethically responsible citizenship. The examples come from grass-roots attempts at peace activism in Israel.

A BIT OF THEORY

To provide a theoretical bridge between personal knowing and social forms and action, I draw upon the works of Gendlin and phenomenologist Emmanuel Levinas. Both show, though differently, how *'integrity'* is not a fixed concept, value, or emotional state alone, but is of a far richer and wiser experiential order.

In *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, Levinas states, "The psyche in the soul is the other in me" (p. 68), an extravagant claim. For Levinas, a Talmudic scholar and philosopher, the Other is at once an inscrutable mystery and intrinsically at the heart of what makes our existence a human existence. To be a true human being is to live from the sure knowledge that my existence is caught up in the lives of my neighbors. My living a life of integrity actually depends on my involvement in their lives, not as a mere spectator, but as one motivated to be of service by virtue of their calling me to be more than I imagined I could be. We can restate Levinas this way: we are all radically part of each other's lives to the point that we cannot ignore our call to be disposed toward the needs of the Other and act ethically in our face-to-face encounters.

Rabbi Melissa Weintraub, in a sermon called "Revelations of the Other, Face to Face," invokes the Torah (Deut. 5:4) where God is speaking to his people

Finally, he suggests, that without a center, without an understanding of the Other as a relation, we suffer, perhaps to the point of individual and societal psychosis.

face-to-face on the mountain of Sinai: "It is when we look into the face—truly look—that revelation takes place." Like Levinas, Rabbi Weintraub points to the radical notion of the face of the other as a site of profound revelation, a revelation of caring and societal stewardship in which the order of our being essentially involves us choosing to be responsible for *the Other*.

Make no mistake; this is no naïve notion of care and responsibility. Levinas' ontology reveals just how integral we, the Other and Us, are to each other. Without Her I cannot be at peace. Without a Me that is *for Her*, I am adrift and without a center. Finally, he suggests, that without a center, without an understanding of the Other as a relation, we suffer, perhaps to the point of individual and societal psychosis. We can see this last point most clearly if we look at recent changes in our own society. In some ways we are more likely now to show support for individual and national needs over seeing the needs of others as of equal if not greater value to our own. Without having at least a disposition toward seeing the needs of others alongside our own, we run the risk of becoming a heartless society of selfish individuals. This is the psychosis to which Levinas refers; a truly mad society of selfish persons who in the pursuit of their own desire have lost their center and are adrift.

Gendlin's life work has been about mapping how felt experience functions in the creation of meaning, language, and action. For Gendlin, the usual logical order, most evident in scientific theory, is one form of ordering experience, but not the only one and perhaps not the kind of order that will best assist us in tackling complex historical and social problems. To perceive most accurately and then possibly solve our most entrenched and complex personal and social problems he offers to us an *experiential order*.

The experiential order is a *non-logical order* that is found by dipping into concretely felt experience. Let

me give an example from my psychotherapy practice to illustrate. John and Liz, married for 24 years, are at an impasse that could lead to divorce. The impasse centers on what we can call the empty nest syndrome. With the children gone, John and Liz are left with lonely evenings that make their relationship strained. Other marriage counselors suggested various forms of homework designed to expand their repertoire of activities as a couple. On the surface, this looks like a reasonable plan. However, this kind of "logical" approach to their situation didn't work for them.

In our work together, I emphasized that they each had their own distinct experience of being empty nesters, which could be tapped into and then used to help their marriage. They focused for a while on what it was like for them as individuals and then as a couple to be without children in the home. In an atmosphere of compassion, caring, and genuine curiosity about their partner's perspectives, John and Liz found again their reason for marrying in the first place. We started off with a thread like this: "I'm not sure I know you any more, like we're not even on the same page since all the kids left." The "not sure" is what is most important in this bit of communication, not the facts of children moving out of the house. That is history, but what is in-between them now is not being sure.

From here they began to build what Liz called "our second marriage." By first sensing the basic issue between them as being unsure, both John and Liz together realized they could use this sense productively to find their next steps together as a couple. Being unsure is no roadblock to understanding and movement forward. In fact, they soon found out that being unclear and unsure was instead quite exciting. Without this basic step of sensing into their situation beyond what history seemed to be pointing to, they couldn't move together as a couple with integrity.

Integrity, for our purposes, is a felt experience within a wider experiential order that can be found and traced. We can see how this is so rather simply by attending to our felt experience of integrity and by tracing the progression of it. Gendlin's use of the term *experiential order* refers to a larger, philosophical category that contains our individual felt experience. For Liz and John their personal experience of being unsure what lay ahead for them is the felt sense. As I mentioned, a logical way would be to provide homework, given a perception that they lacked a sufficient repertoire of behaviors in their new life together without children.

The wider, experiential order retains logic and reason, but distinctly points to that part of their life together which is unclear and perhaps anxiety provoking. By specifically attending to the felt level of their experience (finding it and tracing it), John and Liz came up with solutions that most likely would not have come from a predominantly conceptual and logical way of looking at being empty nesters.

I am aware that many ways have been developed to help us with attending to felt experiencing. Focusing is the most familiar to me. This simple skill can be taught to almost anyone. It is described by the Focusing Institute as “a powerful and effective way to bypass intellectualism, deal with otherwise overwhelming emotion, and go directly to the source of change,” (www.focusing.org). I have taught Focusing for almost 15 years and it is a significant part of the case examples I present below.

Focusing was developed from research on what makes for successful psychotherapy. Gendlin and Rogers were working on this question in Chicago in the late 1950s and into the early 1960s. After they reviewed audio recordings of several-hundred therapy sessions, a pattern emerged that distinguished clients who changed and stayed changed from those who did not. The key variable was the client’s and therapist’s use of felt bodily experience in sessions.

The successful client and therapist interaction usually started with the client sensing something unclear in relation to what they were discussing. It might start like this: “I’m not really...I don’t know about this. (Pause...) It feels, hum, like, oh, maybe a heaviness in my chest when I think of that.” The therapist doesn’t rush to interpret the heaviness or question what it’s about. Instead, they follow it. If stayed with, the unclear aspect opens up.

Today we can teach clients or any one interested just how to access their bodily felt sense of any situation and employ it to better their lives. Typically this involves four steps as developed by Anne Wiser Cornell. First, we *come inside* by welcoming our present experience whatever it may be. Being friendly to what is there is key here, for it establishes a safer ground from which to proceed. Second is *making contact* with whatever comes by acknowledging and describing it. Third, *deepening contact* involves settling down with our felt sense for a while. After getting a handle on what is there, we can respectfully engage it. Fourth is *coming out*, or sensing a stopping place,

receiving and appreciating what we’ve discovered.

In the case examples from Israel, we can follow how a wider, more than logical order, can and does move people beyond what has already been attempted (unsuccessfully) and see the unexpectedly generated new, fresh solutions and action that follow. To illustrate this dynamic, I offer the following two examples that come from my being a member of a delegation to Israel participating in a conference called “Coming Home to Peace Inside and Outside.”

The conference brought together those of us who use Focusing to share research and strategies for building peace in Israel. We were given the option to participate in a post-conference dialogue with Jews and Palestinians who are dedicated to building new solutions for peace in that region. Our purposes in the dialogues were to listen and learn from those in the region and to offer a model for face-to-face encounters based in Focusing. Both examples below are from the post-conference dialogue groups where we worked with those involved in grass-roots initiatives developing out of a situation with complex historical, religious, and personal dynamics. Each example shows, in different ways, how acting from integrity as a felt experience can contribute to change in an otherwise hopeless situation.

CASE EXAMPLE 1: GRADE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN NORTHERN ISRAEL

After the end of the Israel-Lebanon War of 2006, two grade school principals in northern Israel decided to form a grass-roots coalition for peace. The principals, one of an Arab school and the other of a Hebrew school, met with their respective faculties for several months to talk about the war and its impact on their students. The two principals knew each other from a period they called the ‘peaceful coexistence’ some 20 to 30 years ago. They had remained in contact through the years, and they wanted to be friends again. They enlisted the support of their faculties and met to discuss how to bring the children together, as it was their belief that the children were their best ambassadors for *Salaam*, *Shalom*, or in English *peace*.

Fear and distrust were a major part of the atmosphere in their early discussions. Many had been killed on both sides of the conflict. However, the two principals had a desire to change the situation for their students and the future. This is where the idea for an interfaith, school-to-school peace initiative arose. Today, the initiative involves the faculties and students

“Religion is a nuclear energy. It can be used as a bomb or a force for peace. We can only harness this great energy by looking at each other.”

of many Arab and Hebrew grade schools with boys and girls aged eight to twelve.

During one of the small group meetings held immediately after the conference, we were treated to a concert by a group of eight to twelve year old girls from several schools involved in the project. They sang songs in Hebrew and Arabic, songs that told of their pain, the wars, their losses, and their hopes. In one particularly moving song the girls held hands and sang alternately in Arabic and Hebrew, “We are the stones of the past, the connection our parents do not have. Shalom (Salaam) we are.”

From these meetings I came to see the principals’ integrity as something like a conviction deep inside them that could not be ignored. In fact, one of the principals described the feeling this way when asked why they were even doing this, especially given the complex and intractable nature of the conflicts. “It is in my gut,” she said, and “it is not going to let me off the hook.” From this inner voice, this felt sense of something needing to be done, came a growing coalition of schools and students that takes no national monies.

Two things struck me from these meetings with the principals. First, the people I met are genuinely interested in living out the convictions of their religions with integrity. Second, they have a level of inner conviction to want to make headway toward ending the violence in their country.

CASE EXAMPLE 2: GRASSROOTS PEACE BUILDING AMONG ADULTS

I attended several other group meetings that were comprised of adult Palestinians and Jews hoping to build lasting peace in the region. During these meetings we met in small groups face-to-face. Out of these

meetings we came to an awareness of each other’s social, political, and religious positions, the kind of thing that happens rarely in many efforts for peace. We didn’t agree on some points; in fact, there were some loud and heated debates. However, in the end we all reconnected. One Palestinian man, Hamezeh, had a word that captured how it was that we all could come to see each other without animosity lingering at the edges. His word was ‘cousin.’

For Hamezeh traveling to the conference with his wife required a great deal of effort. Some Palestinians do not hold Israeli citizenship, and the conditions of participation at the conference had to be negotiated many months ahead. During a private conversation Hamezeh and his wife talked about why they came. They believe in the value of meeting face-to-face with their Hebrew cousins when there are conflicts. This is part of their understanding of the teachings of the Koran. Similarly, a rabbi meeting with us said, “Religion is a nuclear energy. It can be used as a bomb or a force for peace. We can only harness this great energy by looking at each other.” He understands that the hurt between them is at the level of religion and is resolvable only through direct encounters with each other.

The Palestinians added that what was most needed for resolving any issues in Israel was to act always with justice. After some more discussion, both Israelis and Palestinians agreed that to act from justice is to ‘act of God.’ This is both a literal command to act justly and a deep awareness of the inseparability of any one person’s actions from the action of God. In other words, God acts in the world through our actions.

Integrity came as part of who they are. It was not a matter of choice in the usual sense of the word. Having a basis in the practice of Focusing, we held our meetings on a firm foundation of respect, compassion, and curiosity. Again, we had no pretense of being able to solve what many have not been able to solve. Rather, our goal was simply to listen with “new ears,” as one Jewish man put it, and see what would come of it.

To be brief, post-conference participants like myself met several times over the weekend, sharing meals and a few evening walks by the Sea of Galilee with the Israeli and Palestinian attendees. Each meeting was a new step; sometimes we seemed to be going forward, and sometime backwards. The resolve of the group stayed steady, each returning to their appreciation of acceptance, welcoming, curiosity and surprise.

SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

For Erikson integrity is what follows successful emotional integration and in a circular fashion connects back to his first ego value, trust. "Trust (the first of our ego values) is here defined as 'the assured reliance on another's integrity,' the last of our values" (p. 269). The case examples suggest that trust and integrity are indeed circular; more so, each exists within the other in our felt experience. The children, the principals, and the adults felt inside themselves a call to be there for the Other, a felt sense almost at odds with the prevailing trend of their national and religious history.

The cases presented show the unexpected nature of how personal process develops into action that is integral with the situation. As stated earlier, personal experience has lately been claimed as mere subjectivity, which cannot speak to larger issues. However, it isn't hard to see how this is not so. In the case of the two principals and in the Israeli and Palestinian dialogue groups we see that integrity functions as a quality at play inside us and between us that leads to honoring differing experience. The further fruitful outcomes of integrity remain to be developed in these two situations, but the seeds are sown.

Humanity in all its disparate glory is made for change. No matter the depth of illusion, no matter the consequent pain and suffering endured, it is possible to renew our lives right down to the structure of our daily life. To change our personal and social world we can tap into our integrity, which, if felt deeply, will generate ideas that excite the imagination for peace and understanding. Integrity, honoring, welcoming, surprise, these are the forerunners of a public peace, which is possible when inner peace is the motivation.

In each case presented there were unforeseen turns and twists. New forms of action arise from the vastness inherent in face-to-face encounters. We see children from different religions come together with their principals and decide to learn the songs and dance of another heritage. Tense moments among Israeli and Palestinian adults gave way to agreement on the meaning of coming from and acting with integrity and justice. In the final analysis, peace and integrity

are from and for each other. One does not last without the other for very long, nor will either retain its originating excitement without the other playing with it and extending its reach.

In our working toward integrity inside and outside we would be well served to recall what the Arabs and Jews in Israel are showing us; learn to honor not hide, to express with integrity not inhibit, to join together and calm hurts and fear as far as possible.

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Seeing Stars

James Torrens, S.J.

STARRY NIGHT IN L.A.

He fixes the number of the stars,
he calls each one by its name.

Psalm 147

Maps of the stars and star tours
and sidewalks studded with stars
are no-shows in our vicinity
of spent nurses and ordinary Joes.

Their windows seem black holes
by day, but when the night blows
cold and clear each solitary house
on the hills around here glows.

Each hearth, thanks to the dust we are,
is in the throes of starbirth,
brightness accruing slowly
in a fusion of their joys and woes.

Elements disclose their colors
as each, in a chosen magnitude,
swells into giant, dims to dwarf
or in the main sequence goes.

The merest mortals like hot coals
pulse with the ebbs and flows
of stellar adolescence, or burn
with the steadiness the sun knows.

Living on the edge of Hollywood, I cannot claim to be in touch with the normal American outlook. Ours is decidedly a celebrity culture. The indications are myriad. For instance, the sizable "Real Estate" section of the Sunday *Los Angeles Times* features a column called "Hot Property." Herein we learn what a given actor or actress, or other mover and shaker, is paying, or asking, for a sumptuous estate.

The coverage of our luminaries is constant.

In this regard I find Los Angeles to compare unfavorably with New York City, which also teems with icons. In Manhattan it is an unspoken rule to let celebrities go past on the streets, line up for movies, attend concerts, without anyone affecting to recognize them. (At least, that is how it was in the Nineties, when I lived there. I fondly hope it remains so.) Perhaps people in New York have a stronger sense of who they themselves are (too strong a sense?!). Perhaps they just think, "For Pete's sake, let these people have a life too."

The point I want to make is that our star systems, our feverish competitions to be an American idol, our immense salaries to athletic high achievers, warp the scale for everyone. The fawning attention, the inquisitive and often harsh publicity, puts maturity way out of reach for most celebrities. A case in point is the American athletes at the Olympics. They achieve attention sometimes more for their adolescent stunts and pouts than for their prowess. But the worse thing is that this culture of rankings puts everyone else in the shade, it diminishes other real achievements.

Beyond denial there are superstars, people of dazzling accomplishment and tireless exertion. But some of them make us think of supernovas, those stars exploding into an immense brilliance for the very shortest time before collapse.

The thing to emphasize here is the tremendous intensity of ordinary human life. The Human Potential movement got that very right. Each individual has resources, energies, affections, mental powers that should awaken awe in us. That holds equally for those whom wise heads have recently entitled "handicapped." In the precious vignettes of his adopted family at Daybreak, the L'Arche community in Toronto, Henri Nouwen kept witnessing to their high human value.

Father Michael J. Buckley, S.J., once wrote that it is characteristic of Jesuits to do things *intensamente*, intensely. It strikes me now that this can be said of anybody, given half a chance, half an encouragement. Each human life burns intensely. This does not mean

that everyone can pass physics, or master the cello or learn Chinese. It does mean that no one can be written off, and that everyone can surprise. God did not make junk. The Good Shepherd would never accept that some sheep just have to be written off.

For ages, fiction, the theater and the screen have been displaying the immense drama in each human life. Happy outcomes are no guarantee, but how many good stories emerge from the everyday material. True, negative forces are at play around us and within us all the time. We are hampered, or dampened, in innumerable ways. Gerald May made that pretty clear in his classic, *Addiction and Grace*. But these compulsions and inhibitions are generally the dark side of talents, personal gifts, continual graces. The latter constitute the real truth about us and about the very next person to walk through our door.

To put it all briefly, despite our depressive thinking and narrowing of horizons, the heavens still have a place for each of us. How silly that some people these days are getting others to pay for the privilege of having a star way up there named after them. What we should see out there when we look up on a clear night

is not bright properties waiting to be registered under our name, but powerful metaphors for our inner selves. The sky does, for sure, include exploding or fading stars and black holes sucking the luminescence out. But the fruitful image of our own destiny must be the steady unspectacular shining that is called "main sequence" and is observable in our sun.

Yes, anyone alive is a star in formation, however unpredictable the process. Our calling is to glow now with the unique human intensity that our gifts and our grace make possible. Our purpose, long-term, is to end up like the figures in Dante's *Paradiso*, in God's heaven, the realm of unimaginable glory reflected in us.



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Report on Ovarian Cancer

A recent *New York Times* article, "Symptoms Found for Early Check on Ovary Cancer" by Denise Grady, June 13, 2007, announced that cancer experts have identified a set of health problems that may be symptoms of ovarian cancer. This deadly cancer, often not detected until it has spread, is frequently misdiagnosed because many of the symptoms are vague.

The first symptoms of this disease are bloating, pelvic or abdominal pain, difficulty eating or feeling full quickly and feeling a frequent or urgent need to urinate. It was recommended by a number of oncologists that women with these symptoms, lasting two or more weeks, seek medical attention from a gynecologist, "especially if the symptoms are new and quite different from her usual state of health."

Since the disease is among the deadlier types of cancer, the sooner this disease is diagnosed and treated, the better the chance of survival.

Many factors about diagnosis and treatment need to be considered so the recommendation is to seek medical attention early when these symptoms occur.

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP:

Internal Bearings at Intersection

Marianne LaBarre and Lê X. Hy

Father John, Richard, and Reverend Ellen joined the Pastoral Leadership Program (PLP) with impressive pastoral credentials. Father John was simultaneously serving six rural parishes and a large general hospital. Richard, a lay leader, had oversight of a dynamic parish community with its own school; and, in addition, his parish had over 1000 Hispanic families and another 1000 Anglo families. Reverend Ellen's African-American congregation had been expanding over the past 15 years into an energetic and vibrant community.

These laudable examples of service, which appear so highly successful from an outsider's point of view, hide deep undercurrents and serious problems for each of these pastoral leaders. Running at breakneck speed, Father John found the insurmountable demands on his time unrelenting; they showed no sign of abating as they chipped away at his health and his life. Because the Catholic Church hesitates to allow lay leaders to have the responsibility for leading parishes, Richard came to the program disheartened, weighed down and bone weary from the load he was carrying. Reverend Ellen shared with the group that she had written her letter of resignation five times over the past five



months, but had not yet had the courage to hand it in.

As is clear from these vignettes, pastoral leaders today face oversized challenges. The Alban Institute corroborates our experience; it has reported that about 40% of clergy face burnout. We will briefly look to some psychological theories of human development for direction, and describe a program we have to revitalize and support these pastoral leaders. To help readers use similar methods in their own settings, we will pose a number of questions in the last section of this article.

SOME DEVELOPMENTAL VIEWS

Pastoral leaders coming into the program often notice that their zeal, which was high at the beginning of their ministry, has diminished over time. Their deep sense of "calling" from God and their faith community, so inspiring initially, can get crowded out by the overwhelming demands of ministry. Many feel helpless. The vignettes show that even those who appear successful are worn out. Two concepts help us understand this phenomenon: Richard deCharms' Origin-Pawn, and Parker Palmer's Undivided Self.

A pastoral leader accustomed to pouring experi-

ence and energy toward making others happy might be described as a "Pawn," moved by outside influences. In contrast, an "Origin" can enjoy her work and her role whether she receives outside approval or not. An Origin acts out of his or her own autonomy and internal desire for the action, not for external rewards. Parker Palmer in both *Let Your Life Speak* and *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life* invites readers to listen to their soul within and to live out of an Undivided Life, which matches the Origin in deCharms' theory of personal causation.

Would these Origins who live Undivided Lives be so autonomous that they are isolated and even selfish? Is that goal even desirable? Fortunately, different developmental theories and their research data indicate the opposite. Andre Rochais' PRH (*Personnalité et Relations Humaines*) shows that people's deepest and most autonomous selves are also connected with others at their deepest level. Lawrence Kohlberg's Moral Development stages show a move toward a universal concern for all people. Jane Loevinger's Ego Development stages, like Erik Erikson's "Eight Ages of Man," culminate in Integrity which intimately connects with others: "Ego integrity ... implies an emotional integration which permits participation by fellowship as well as acceptance of the responsibility of leadership" (*Childhood and Society*, p. 269). In short, by going deeply into one's own call and motivation, leaders are able to become more deeply connected to others, and from this place of authenticity more genuinely connect with others than is possible when they neglect themselves to please others.

Research has made clear that few people get to the Integrated level whether measured by Kohlberg, Loevinger, or other methods; and that people will not be able to jump to the Integrated level in nine months, no matter how good the nine-month program is. Erikson comes to our rescue here. It seems like everyone knows Erikson's eight stages, but probably few realize that the development trend, epigenesis, "by no means signifies a mere succession... [E]ach part exists in some form before 'its' decisive and critical time normally arrives and remains systematically related to all others..." (Erikson, *The Life Cycle Completed*, pp. 28-29; italics original). In other words, Integrity in its complete form normally arrives only at the last stage, but at the same time, there is an element of integrity "in some form" at each of the earlier stages. This element is what we aim for in our program.

We use the image of an intersection to visualize and guide pastoral leaders in our program. Imagine each pastoral leader standing at a unique intersection of many convergent roads. The intersection can be busy, dangerous and confusing, like the busy lives of many people. We intentionally use the image of roads to signify the different dimensions that touch all of us. Socially, we interact with many different people. Temporally, our lives now are influenced by past influences and possible future directions. Spatially, these roads represent different domains of one's life, such as our motivations, understanding, habits, etc. There are many other types of intersections as well.

The intersection image makes clear two key ideas. Leaders need internal bearings, knowing their own purpose, to guide them in the midst of much confusion. The other idea appears to be the contrary: by exploring a number of different roads, leaders come to know them better and thus gain sharper internal bearings. These two ideas are signature characteristics of our program: we nurture a "safe space" for people to get in tune again with their call or their internal bearings, and we also create a "brave space" with challenging diversity for them to sharpen and clarify their inner bearings more fully. Diversity challenges and enhances integrity.

THE PASTORAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Pastoral Leadership Program (PLP), in Seattle University's School of Theology and Ministry, offers to experienced pastoral leaders an opportunity to revitalize their ministry and call. In this nine-month certificate program pastoral leaders meet two to three full days per month over a nine month period. The usual cohort includes Protestants, from as many as eight ecclesial communities, and Roman Catholics, both lay and ordained. Each year, to date, between one-fourth and one-third of the participants are from minority communities, and generally between 20-25 percent of the group is either gay or lesbian.

To establish a safe space for these leaders, we use a wide range of converging methods, somewhat similar to Freud's concept of overdetermination (multiple causes of one psychological effect). The program director affirms each participant in the initial interview. In the first month, participants have an outdoor learning experience in the woods with unique challenges. Participants are strongly encouraged and affirmed by their peers. Through this process they achieve

Multicultural Leadership helps people
reframe interpersonal conflicts in a way
that reaffirms their own direction while,
at the same time, learning to see
people in a different light and attitude.

unthinkable feats, such as a person with vertigo climbing a 40-foot tree and jumping from there (with a harness). Such vivid achievements are celebrated for years, even after the program, and help to strengthen the bond in the group. Another method used is peer groups of about 4 people each, carefully constructed and guided, where people bond quickly, supporting one another through the year.

Still other methods enhance this safe space for people to withdraw from the entanglements of their environment and focus on their inner bearings. One obvious method is individual coaching or spiritual direction. Still another method is helping participants reframe their lives by using broad theories presented in coursework. We use Ron Heifetz' notion of leaving the "stage" where we always act in life, and going up to the "balcony" to gain a different perspective. Another helpful concept by Heifetz, which we use to help leaders, is the distinction between technical and adaptive changes. In the former experts solve problems by simply tweaking existing structures. With adaptive changes there is an engagement of the larger group with the deeper underlying issues of the problem and a movement toward an organic and congruent response that honors the integrity of the whole community. This process can offer leaders the option of moving out of a "lone ranger" stance and not carrying the entire burden by themselves.

We find that diversity, at this stage, enhances the safe space. One of the ecumenical gifts of the program is that these ministers can take a break from the current "political crises" of their denominations. The fear and anxiety perpetuated in denominations around hot topic issues, such as homosexuality in the Episcopal Church or the ongoing sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church, can lead to paralysis as relationships or motivations are questioned at every level. In this program we have the freedom to "go to the balcony" and look at deep and broad issues that derive from using gospel values as a plumb line for renewing effective-

tiveness as pastoral leaders. A deepened renewal and zeal flows from renewing one's sense of call or from delving into large global questions like environmental sustainability and asking what the Church's role is in relation to these questions.

In addition, every program faculty member and staff makes conscious and concrete efforts to wrap every participant in our best love and care: all books are provided, parking spaces are taken care of, abundant food and refreshment are available, etc. Additional exercises are used to bring out the best qualities of our participants. Two such exercises will be cited here. Participants are asked to go back to their leadership histories and identify what was lifegiving and tapped their passion for ministry. Then, as they reflect on their challenges, they set personalized goals for their own growth for the year in a learning contract.

With numerous efforts (some not cited here) to establish a safe space for a rich inner journey, that safe place is established, often just in time for the coming storm. By about the third month, differences come out in full strength, possibly because people feel safe enough, though the conflict is not easy. The issue might be the sexual orientation of some members in the group, which may also be intertwined with theology, political party, race, and so on. Some personal behaviors, not positively contributing to the group, also are called into question. Though people still retain some sense of the safe space that has been strongly established, the honeymoon is definitely over. People enter "brave space," and PLP continues to use a wide range of methods to assist the growth and learning.

The humming tension in the group creates an effective teachable moment for a two-day course in Multicultural Leadership which helps people reframe interpersonal conflicts in a way that reaffirms their own direction while, at the same time, learning to see people in a different light and attitude. A whole range of methods are used in this class: Scripture, fiction, history, linguistic analysis, play acting, poetry, small group discussion, large group discussion, and so on. The reading materials deliberately draw from various sources to show beauty in places that people might not have looked, such as piety practices and development stages in Sufism and Buddhism.

A nearly unanimous response to the Multicultural Leadership course has been to ask for more. PLP continues to move people into the practice of using diversity for internal growth in the next course on family systems. In

In this course, participants look into their own family to understand themselves better. They help one another spot the patterns in their individual histories. Once these patterns are more conscious, the growth in awareness furthers connection with their own inner bearings, and they are not as easily influenced by an unexamined past.

Additional retreats and courses support participants in examining the roads and intersection as they claim a keener sense of their own inner bearings. Classmates also play a key role. When people attempt to explain their own tradition to those in other denominations, three experiences are common. First, participants are surprised at the work and engagement involved as they explain their own tradition to others who are genuinely curious, when they may have taken it for granted. Second, it is liberating and enriching to learn from other traditions. Third, and probably the strongest sentiment, is the realization that no matter how tough one's own situation is, one is usually far more at home with one's own tradition and recommits to it with a renewed investment.

OUTCOMES

Accomplishments, in addition to deepened theological reflection, include a more expansive perspective of leadership; a broadened sense of possible alternatives for both personal and congregational growth; regained confidence in pastoral gifts and calling; growth in ecumenical and multicultural understanding and involvement; and the provision of a safe place to be vulnerable and to be seen, heard, and accepted. Responses from the survey dissemination this year affirm these findings. Through class work, personal reflection, prayer, sharing wisdom and personal stories with other participants, pastoral leaders gain colleagues and support systems that allow them to push beyond preconceived boundaries—whether personal, professional, or faith-based. From evaluations that contain the options both to rank specific course elements and provide comments, we have discovered that participants are learning to trust across cultural, racial, and congregational lines. Given the safety of “time away,” they are able to step back and get the big picture, or, as some participants echo from coursework, “to get a perspective from the balcony.” From this perspective, participants see the commonalities in their issues and relate to each other as they explore alternatives that might bring resolution. The underpinnings of personal

prayer and faith in these processes are evidenced in the wisdom and humility of participant responses during the evaluation process.

An example of cross-denominational bonding occurred in the 2005-2006 Pastoral Leadership group, when Jesuit priest Peter Byrne and Presbyterian minister Barry Keating formed a bond in terms of their Irish lineage. Peter joined Barry in a 2005 pilgrimage to Northern Ireland to meet with Protestant and Catholic leadership. In 2006 Barry, as a guest of St. Ignatius Catholic Parish in Portland, Oregon, described his ongoing work in Peace and Reconciliation among Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. Their continued outreach for peace and dialogue continues to have a long-term impact on these pastoral leaders' lives.

How do pastoral leaders who navigate by their internal bearings act? What enables those involved with the challenges of ministry to live and act with integrity? We have seen a few common patterns which we will highlight and frame in reflective questions:

Boundaries: In regular meetings with graduates of PLP, we hear a recurring gratitude for having affirmed the clear value of and commitment to definite boundaries for effective ministry. *What boundaries do I need to set in place in terms of my schedule, appointments and responsibilities to ensure that I can sustain excellence in my pastoral leadership?*

Balance: Many participants have spoken of the sense of sheer drudgery, burden, and discouragement with their lives of ministry. Now, alums returning from ski trips speak of the mountains as sacred holy sites, and others send us poetry from days of reflection and affirm that they have rediscovered how to put balance into their lives. Still other graduates have formed ongoing support groups. For long-term ministry effectiveness, it is evident that structured time and tools for self-renewal and support are key to connection with internal bearings. *What do I have built into my schedule in terms of times for renewal, creativity, spiritual nourishment and times for supportive peer relationships?*

Self-Care: One of the most freeing concepts to be internalized through PLP is the clarity of living in the integrity of one's humanity; i.e., not becoming one's “role.” Some program participants have stated how they felt they needed to be living their pastoral role 24/7, and that they needed to have a persona that was constantly cheerful with upbeat energy. Through their work with spiritual coaches and listening to one another in the program, these facades began to drop away,

and leaders were more able to become their authentic selves. *Is it time for me to begin to work with a spiritual director, coach or counselor? In order for me to live attuned to my own integrity and authenticity what supportive relationship is needed?*

Delegation: Across denominations there seems to be an unrealistic pressure for ministers to take care of all problems in their ministries by themselves. When Dr. Sharon Parks teaches how good leadership empowers others to action and authority, a sense of relief is tangible in the room. One student, Rev. Charlie Jackson, became animated as he described how thrilling it was to have freed the Deacons in his church to make presentations on various leadership themes at their regular Saturday morning meeting. For years he believed it was entirely up to him to make presentations in front of the group. Now the whole leadership in the church is on fire with their empowered gifts and Charlie is free to take on additional creative ministerial ventures because the Deacons can handle the regular training and maintenance duties within the church. *How can I raise my delegation skills to the next level? How can the staff and volunteers I work with be empowered to take on new responsibilities?*

Safety: A significant lesson learned from our work with a diverse group of participants is the power of, and generativity unleashed by, having a safe environment. Instead of the dynamic of closing in on oneself and holding oneself tightly when threatened and insecure, we have witnessed—countless times—the liberation that comes through creating an atmosphere that is profoundly safe. Creating safety for the group is no small task when the prevailing social attitudes of competition, one-upmanship and caution enter the class. A further hindrance, during the initial stages of group formation, comes when some participants are unable and unwilling to show up and be intentionally present. As the year progresses and the group has moved through the “forming” and “storming” stages of formation, a new atmosphere begins to prevail—participants begin to believe that they are actually in a safe place to tell the truth, to be supportive, and to engage in the depth of intimacy required for integrity. At this point a great release occurs. What we see is that to the extent the participants feel deeply safe, they are able to let go of preconceived limits and the habits of being overly guarded. To the extent that they are able to live out of their own deep truths, and admit with humility the struggles that they are dealing with, new growth can

occur. Over the last four years we have seen a direct correlation between the quality of safety that we are able to create and the spirit of freedom and expansiveness that is released. *In what context am I most safe and free to live my own authenticity? If this is missing from my life what individual or group relationships can I cultivate to fill this need?*

We live in a stressful and confusing world where pastoral leaders can let the demands of that world crush them, or they can get their internal bearings in God. PLP uses a wide range of methods, particularly those focusing on the intersection of safety and diversity, to help pastoral leaders achieve this goal of realigning their faith, practice and service.

RECOMMENDED READING

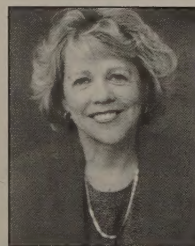
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